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Department of  
Environmental Quality

Alan Matheson  
Executive Director

Brad T Johnson  
Deputy Director

**NEWS RELEASE**

July 19, 2016

CONTACT

Donna Kemp Spangler

DEQ

801-536-4484

[dspangler@utah.gov](mailto:dspangler@utah.gov)

Aislynn Tolman-Hill

Utah County Health Department

385-204-4627

[AislynnT@utahcounty.gov](mailto:AislynnT@utahcounty.gov)

## Utah County Section of Jordan River Closed Due to Harmful Algae

SALT LAKE CITY -- Utah County Health Department (UCHD) has closed the Utah County section of the Jordan River due to harmful algae that continues to pose a health risk to the public, pets, and other animals. This is the second closure issued by UCHD.

Utah Lake has been closed since July 15 after lab results for samples collected by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) showed the concentration of algal cells in the water were three times the threshold for closing a body of water.

It still remains uncertain when the algal bloom will dissipate and warning or closure signs removed. Algal blooms can last for days or weeks and toxins can last for days after the bloom. DEQ's Division of Water Quality doesn't expect to have results from the water samples tested to determine the toxicity of the bloom until later this week.

This warning does not affect drinking water, since it comes from a separate source.

Residents who receive secondary water from the Jordan River should not use it. Secondary water is commonly used for watering lawns and gardens. Irrigation companies, and some cities, have shut down secondary water as a precaution.

UCHD has posted danger signs at all major recreational access points to the Jordan River within Utah County; the Jordan River and all canals in both Utah and Salt Lake counties are potentially unsafe for people and animals.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) strongly advises farmers and ranchers against using water from Utah Lake for food production, especially fruits and vegetables, and livestock watering until lab results are available early next week. If farmers and ranchers have access to other water sources UDAF advises them to use those alternate sources to water crops, livestock and other animals.

Pet owners are also advised to keep animals away from the lake, river and canals and should not let them drink the water. Pets that have been exposed to affected waters and are exhibiting symptoms should be seen by a veterinarian. Symptoms in pets include weakness, fatigue and excessive saliva production.

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195 North 1950 West • Salt Lake City, UT  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 144810 • Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4810  
Telephone (801) 536-4400 • Fax (801) 536-0061 • T.D.D. (801) 903-3978

[www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov)

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Anglers are also currently advised not to fish, or consume fish from Utah Lake and sections of the Jordan River that feed out of the lake. Anyone who has caught fish from those areas in, or after July 10, is advised to not consume their catch.

Sampling in Utah Lake on July 13 led to the discovery of the harmful cyanobacteria. The toxins that can be produced by the species can cause liver damage and/or neurological damage. Exposure to the algae can cause vomiting, headaches, and skin rashes. Contact your physician or the Utah Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) if you believe you may be experiencing symptoms from exposure to a harmful algal bloom.

For updates on lake and river conditions in Utah County, go to [alerts.utahcounty.gov](http://alerts.utahcounty.gov) and sign up for an account. After signing up, select the method of contact, create a profile, and select a location. Then choose the alert subscription for “Utah Lake” under “Utah County Alerts.”

Agencies involved include various State agency departments, including the departments of Agriculture and Food, Environmental Quality, Health, Natural Resources, Public Safety and various divisions within those departments. At the local level, responding agencies include the Utah County, Salt Lake County health departments, irrigation companies and water districts, as well as the municipalities in the affected counties.

For more information, visit: <http://deq.utah.gov/locations/U/utahlake/algal-bloom.htm>

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**About DEQ**

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) mission is to safeguard public health and quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah’s air, land and water. For more information, visit [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov), follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.

