



Health Department

RALPH CLEGG

Executive Director

ERIC EDWARDS

Deputy Director

MEDIA RELEASE

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CONTACT

Aislynn Tolman-Hill

Utah County Health Department

Phone/Mobile: 385-204-4627

AislynnT@utahcounty.gov

Utah County Algal Bloom Update

Algal Bloom Advisories change both for the better and worse

PROVO, UT – Utah County Health Department (UCHD) officials have updated advisories related to the algal bloom in Utah County waterbodies. Changes in advisories are based on recent testing results and monitoring, and are as follows:

Utah Lake

- All marinas/areas: CAUTION advisory

Payson Lakes

- Big East Lake: changed from a WARNING to a DANGER advisory
- All other Payson Lakes: CAUTION advisory

The public and animals should stay out of Big East Lake, part of Payson Lakes. “The DANGER advisory is essentially a closure, as people and animals should not be in or on the lake,” says UCHD Executive Director, Ralph Clegg. “While the cyanobacteria cell counts are decreasing in Utah Lake, the toxin counts in Big East Lake pose a risk to the public and animals.”

UCHD last increased advisories in two (2) water bodies on August 30th. Utah County Health Department along with Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will continue to monitor and test bodies of water showing signs of algal blooms.

Although algae are a natural part of many freshwater ecosystems, under the right conditions they can proliferate to create large algal blooms. These blooms can contain harmful cyanobacteria, a type of bacteria (often referred to as blue-green algae) that produces toxins that can pose risks to humans, wildlife, domestic animals and fish.

Symptoms of cyanotoxin poisoning include headache, fever, diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes allergic-like reactions from the skin. For concerns about possible human exposure, call the Utah Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222, or your physician. For concerns about possible exposure to animals; contact local veterinarian.

Updates are available at: <http://deq.utah.gov/locations/U/utahlake/algal-bloom.htm>

Utah County has an alert system. For updates on lake conditions, go to 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.”

General information about harmful algal blooms is available from DEQ at <http://www.deq.utah.gov/Pollutants/H/harmfulalgalblooms/index.htm>