



## **Algal Bloom Detected in Provo Bay Public Warned to Avoid Area**

PROVO, UT - The public, their pets, and other animals are warned to stay out of Utah Lake's Provo Bay due to the discovery of a blue-green algal bloom. The Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Division of Water Quality (DWQ) has collected samples and found the presence of algal species that have the potential to produce toxins.

"Utah Lake is a huge lake with many areas not currently affected," says Eric Edwards, Deputy Director of Utah County Health Department. "We want those recreating to safely enjoy the lake and also make sure they are properly cautioned about the presence about potential harmful algal blooms in certain areas of the lake that can pose health risks."

Water Quality crews responded on June 6, 2018, to a report of an algal bloom in Provo Bay and collected five samples at various locations at and around the Swede Sportsman Access. Sample results detected the presence of two cyanotoxins, anatoxin-a and microcystin, with one sample at the Swede Sportsman Access (5.5 micrograms per liter (ug/L) microcystin) exceeding the Utah Department of Health/ Utah Department of Environmental Quality health-based threshold for recreational waters. All three samples sent to the lab for cell-count concentrations exceeded the health-based threshold, with cell counts ranging from approximately 400,000 cells per milliliter (cells/ml) to more than 21 million cells/ml. The cell count is an indication of harmful levels of cyanobacteria.

Water Quality crews will continue to collect additional samples around the lake beginning June 11, 2018.

Utah County Health Department is posting warning signs at Swede Sportsman Access near Provo Bay to warn people about recreating in the Bay due to the presence of potentially harmful algal blooms.

Although blue-green algae are a natural part of many freshwater ecosystems, under the right conditions they can proliferate rapidly. High levels of nutrients in the water, combined with warm temperatures, abundant sunlight, and calm water, can promote growth, resulting in extensive blooms. These blooms consist of cyanobacteria (often referred to as blue-green algae), a type of bacteria that poses risks to humans, wildlife, domestic animals and fish. Symptoms of exposure include headache, fever, diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes allergic- like reactions from skin contact.

For concerns about possible human exposure, call the Utah Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222, or your physician.

DEQ will continue to provide updated information at [habs.utah.gov](http://habs.utah.gov).

To sign up for updates: go to [www.alerts.utahcounty.gov](http://www.alerts.utahcounty.gov), create account. Select contact methods. Create profile, select location. Choose alert subscription "Utah Lake" under "Utah County Alerts."

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