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# NEWS

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**Health Advisory Issued for Lake Cascade**  
*Precautions advised for people, pets and livestock*

**Valley Co., ID** — In cooperation with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), Central District Health Department (CDHD) is issuing a health advisory due to the presence of a cyanobacteria

harmful algal bloom (HAB) at Lake Cascade in Valley County. Recent samples taken indicate concentrations of toxin-producing cyanobacteria (sometimes called blue-green algae) are present that may cause illness to humans and animals.

Cyanobacteria occur naturally. Cyanobacteria blooms occur in waters with high levels of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. Under certain conditions, some types of algae can release toxins into the water that are harmful to people, pets, and livestock. **Recent tests indicate that these toxins are present.** The blooms are generally green, or blue-green, and may form thick mats along shorelines. These may look like a surface scum, resembling pea soup and can have an unpleasant odor or stench.

**CDHD and DEQ advise the following precautions be taken where harmful algal blooms are known to be present:**

- Humans and animals should stay out of the affected water. Swimming, wading, or other activities with full body contact of pond water should be avoided.
- Humans, pets, and livestock should not drink the affected water.
- Fish should be cleaned and rinsed with clean water. Only the fillet portion should be consumed. All other parts should be discarded.
- Pets and livestock are vulnerable to cyanobacteria and their toxins and should stay out of water where blooms are visible. Pets and livestock can be exposed to cyanobacteria and their toxins through drinking, swimming, or self-grooming by licking their wet coat or paws. A reaction will likely require immediate veterinary attention.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae.
- If affected water contacts skin or pet fur, wash with clean with potable water as soon as possible.
- Areas of visible algae accumulation should be avoided.

Samples taken indicate unsafe bacteria cell counts, so everyone should heed these precautions and avoid contact with the water.

**Symptoms of Exposure**

People who are exposed to water with high concentrations of cyanobacteria or cyanotoxins may experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, skin irritation, allergic responses, liver damage, or neurotoxic reactions such as tingling fingers and toes. Anyone with symptoms should seek medical attention. Boiling or filtering the water will not remove cyanotoxins.

**More Information on HABs**

For more information about harmful algal blooms, including a map of advisories currently in effect throughout Idaho, visit DEQ's website at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/recreation-health-advisories/>

**Additional Resources:**

CDHD - [Harmful Algal Blooms Webpage](#)

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – [Harmful Algal Blooms Webpage](#)

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