

Public Notice

July 22, 2016

Dear resident /property owner:

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is providing this notice because a potential blue-green algal bloom has been detected in **Lake St. John**, Ramara Township.

Water sampling has been conducted but the results have not yet been received to confirm the presence of algal toxins. Due to the appearance of the water at some locations, we strongly believe that a blue-green algal bloom is present and we are therefore exercising caution that toxins may also be present.

If you are drawing your water from Lake St. John, **boiling or other home treatment devices will not destroy toxins. Do not use the water for drinking or for food preparation including breastmilk substitute (infant formula).** Safe water sources include municipal water, bottled water or a good well that is not affected by lake water. The health unit will continue to monitor the algal bloom and you will be notified when the water is safe for use.

Algal toxins can harm humans and animals. The health unit advises residents and businesses not to drink or use the water from this lake and to take the following precautions:

- do not use the water for drinking, making infant formula, dishwashing, brushing teeth, bathing/showering
- do not prepare food or cook with the lake water because food may absorb toxins from the water
- do not swim in the lake water
- do not allow pets or livestock to drink or swim in the water
- do not use the water to water lawns or gardens
- do not eat fish caught from the lake. Algal toxins can accumulate in fish, particularly in organs such as the liver and kidney, and
- do not use herbicides, copper sulphate or other algicides that may break open algae cells and release toxins into the water

The toxin may cause skin and eye irritation, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and /or fever, so bathing, showering, swimming and other water sport activities which increase the risk of ingestion and/or skin contact with algae material and toxins should be avoided. Anyone who comes into contact with blue green algae should rinse off with fresh water. Pets and livestock are also affected, therefore use of water from this source is not recommended for animals.

Blue-green algae blooms naturally occur in fresh water lakes, bays and inlets, usually during warmer weather. They thrive where water is shallow, nutrient-rich, slow moving and warm, but may also be present in deeper water.

For further information, call Your Health Connection Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520. Links to general information and updates about blue-green algae are available on the health unit website at www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Sincerely,
Charles Gardner, MD, CCFP, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

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