

Public Notice Update: Blue-Green Algae

Public Notice LIFTED

November 9, 2017

Dear Lake St. John resident/property owner:

Please be advised that the [public health notice](#) regarding precautions for blue green algae issued on August 23, 2017 by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) for Lake St. John has been **lifted**.

This public notice had advised residents not to use the water for drinking or for food preparation including breastmilk substitute (infant formula) and to use an alternate safe water source such as municipal water, bottled water or a well that is not affected by lake water.

Recent sampling conducted by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, shows a steady decline in toxin levels (total microcystins). Generally, cooler weather, rainfall, and reduced sunshine will lead to the breakup of an algal bloom.

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 below the surface.

The best method of dealing with algal blooms is prevention. Decreasing the amount of nutrients, such as phosphates and nitrogen, entering the water source can effectively reduce the occurrence and severity of algal blooms. This means using phosphate-free detergents, not using fertilizers on lakefront properties, taking steps to impede agricultural run-off, and ensuring that septic systems do not leak into the water source.

For more information please call the SMDHU Health Connection service from 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 about blue-green algae are available on the health unit website at www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

If you suspect a blue-green algae bloom, please assume toxins are present, avoid using the water and call the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre at 1-800-268-6060.

Sincerely,

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

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