

Blue Green Algae

If you suspect a blue-green algal bloom, call the Spills Action Centre (SAC) at 1-800-268-6060.

The [Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change](#) (MOECC) has confirmed that these waterways have blue-green algae. The MOECC collects and tests algae samples and reports the results to the Health Unit.

Waterbodies confirmed to have blue-green algae in Simcoe County and the District of Muskoka:

Affected Waterbody	Municipality	Date
Lake St. John	Ramara	August 23, 2017

If blooms are visible:

- Do not use the water for preparing breastmilk substitute (infant formula).
- People should not use the water for drinking, food preparation, bathing or showering.
- Do not allow children, pets and or livestock to swim in or drink the water.
- Avoid eating fish caught from areas where an algae bloom is present.
- If you suspect a blue-green algal bloom, call the Spills Action Centre at 1-800-268-6060.

How to reduce blue-green algae blooms:

- Use phosphate-free detergents, personal care and household cleaning products.
- Avoid using fertilizers on lawns, especially fertilizers that contain phosphorus.
- Maintain a natural shoreline on lake and riverfront properties.
- Reduce agricultural runoff by planting or maintaining vegetation along waterways and minimizing fertilizer use.
- Check septic systems to ensure they do not leak into the water source.

Source: Government of Ontario, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Blue-Green Algae Fact Sheet

How to identify blue-green algae:

Learn how to identify blue-green algae so you can protect yourself and your family.



Category 1

- water appears cloudy
- should not swim or allow children to play in water
- no health effects at this stage



Category 2

Algae may be in balls or flakes in the water, like a pea puree

- do not swim or allow children to play in water
- do not use the water for drinking, cooking, rinsing foods, or washing dishes
- do not let pets or livestock drink the water



Category 3

This is a dense bloom and may resemble a paint spill or scum on the water

- do not swim or allow children to play in the water
- do not use the water for drinking, cooking, rinsing foods, or washing dishes
- do not let pets or livestock drink the water

Adapted with permission from Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

For more information:

- [Blue-green Algae](#) - Ministry of Environment and Climate Change

- [Cyanobacterial Toxins - Microcystin-LR \(Blue-green Algae\)](#) - *Health Canada*
- [Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality](#)