

July 18, 2024

## Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) advisory issued for Clear Lake

WAINWRIGHT – Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) has been identified in the waters of Clear Lake, located southeast of Wainwright. Residents living near the shores of this lake, as well as visitors to this lake, are advised to take the following precautions:

- **Avoid all contact** with cyanobacterial blooms. If contact occurs, wash with tap water as soon as possible.
- **Do not swim or wade or allow your pets to swim or wade** in any areas where cyanobacteria is visible.
- **Do not** feed whole fish or fish trimmings from this lake to your pets.
- Consider limiting human consumption of whole fish and fish trimmings from this lake, as it is known that fish may store toxins in their liver. (People can safely consume fish fillets from this lake).

As always, visitors and residents are reminded to **never** drink or cook with untreated water directly from any recreational body of water, including Clear Lake, at any time. Boiling of this water will not remove the toxins produced by cyanobacteria. An alternate source of drinking water should also be provided for pets and livestock, while this advisory is active.

Cyanobacteria is naturally occurring, and often becomes visible when weather conditions are calm. Appearing like scum, grass clippings, fuzz, or globs on the surface of water, cyanobacteria can be blue-green, greenish-brown, brown, and/or pinkish-red, and often smell musty or grassy.

People who come in contact with visible cyanobacteria or who ingest water containing cyanobacteria may experience skin irritation, rash, sore throat, sore red eyes, swollen lips, fever, nausea and vomiting and/or diarrhea. Symptoms usually appear within one to three hours and resolve in one to two days. Symptoms in children are often more pronounced; however, all humans are at risk of these symptoms. Exposure to the bacteria may be fatal to pets.

Weather and wind conditions can cause algae blooms to move from one location in the lake to another. As such, this advisory will remain in effect for Clear Lake, until further notice.

Please note that waters of Clear Lake in which the cyanobacterial bloom is **NOT** visible can still be used for recreational purposes, even while this Health Advisory is in place.

If you suspect a problem related to cyanobacteria or if you require further information on health concerns and cyanobacteria, please call Health Link at 811. Additional information is also available online, at [www.ahs.ca/bqa](http://www.ahs.ca/bqa).

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Our mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans. Our current focus is on reducing emergency department wait-times, improving EMS response times, increasing access to surgeries, and improving patient flow.