



*Public Health Advisory: For distribution to residents of Pleasant Lake, Manchester, Michigan.
Thank you to the Pleasant Lake Property Owners Association for sharing this information.*

Public Health Advisory on Toxic Algae in Pleasant Lake ***Residents, visitors advised to avoid touching algae or scum on lake***

ANN ARBOR, Mich., June 9, 2017 – Washtenaw County Public Health, in consultation with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, is issuing a Public Health Advisory about toxic algae identified in Pleasant Lake in Manchester, Michigan. People and pets should avoid direct body contact with scummy water in the lake or with water that looks like spilled paint or has a green sheen to it. These scums may contain flecks, foam or clumps. People and pets should avoid swallowing lake water.

Based on current information, Washtenaw County Public Health is not advising that people or pets avoid normal lake recreation activities. Normal recreation activities are currently considered safe and include boating, fishing and swimming.

This cautionary advice is based on water samples taken May 27 and today, June 9. Today's results are preliminary and advice may change as more information becomes available. Also, the amount of algae present in the lake could change quickly.

Algae Blooms

Although most blooms are green algae and not harmful, there are some that are a type of cyanobacteria that have the ability to produce toxins – and can result in a harmful algal bloom (HAB). These toxins may affect the liver, nervous system and/or skin.

The type of toxin that can produce a HAB was detected in a single sample from Pleasant Lake taken on May 27. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) took additional samples today, June 9. Preliminary results of today's testing indicate that a cyanobacteria is present in one of the six of the samples. Results about the level of toxin present will be available next week. When these results are available, MDEQ will also determine when to take additional samples.

Out of an abundance of caution, Washtenaw County Public Health wants residents to be aware that the potential for HABs exists on the lake. There is no evidence that an HAB exists now. Residents should remain cautious about contacting algae or potential HABs until at least two additional samples of the lake test clear of algal toxins.

What causes HABs to form?

Some factors that can contribute to HABs include sunlight; low-water or low-flow conditions; calm water; warmer temperatures; and excess nutrients (phosphorus or nitrogen). The primary sources of nutrient pollution are runoff of fertilizers, animal manure, sewage treatment plant discharges, storm water runoff, car and power plant emissions and failing septic tanks.

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How dangerous are HABs?

If you touch HABs, swallow water with HAB toxins or breathe in water droplets, you could get a rash, have an allergic reaction, get a stomach ache, or feel dizzy or light-headed. HABs also are toxic to pets. Always look for HABs before going in the water. Check for any posted HAB advisories.

What should I do if I see a HAB?

- Stay out of water that may have a HAB.
- Do not let your children or pets play in HAB debris on the shore.
- After swimming or wading in lake water, even where no HABs are visible, rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible.
- Never swallow any lake or river water, whether you see HABs or not.
- Do not let pets lick HAB material from their fur or eat HAB material.
- Do not drink or cook with lake water.
- See a doctor if you or your children might be ill from HAB toxins. If your pet appears ill, contact your veterinarian.

More Information

HABs have been a concern in Ohio in recent years, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency has developed a website with a variety of resources about algae in recreational water <http://epa.ohio.gov/habalgae.aspx>. The information above about HABs is taken from the Ohio EPA site.

About Washtenaw County Public Health

Washtenaw County Public Health promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Working with community partners to promote equitable access to health care and resources for healthful living is a critical part of local public health's role. For more, visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org> or call 734-544-6700. Public Health is located at 555 Towner Street in Ypsilanti. The Environmental Health Division is located at 705 N. Zeeb Road in Ann Arbor and reachable by phone at 734-222-3800.

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