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NEWS

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Health Advisory Issued for Long Tom and Mountain Home Reservoirs

Elmore County – In cooperation with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Central District Health Department (CDHD) is issuing a health advisory for Long Tom and Mountain Home Reservoirs, located northeast of Mountain Home off of Highway 20 in Elmore County. Residents are urged to use caution when recreating in or near the water.

Recent samples taken from the reservoir indicate the presence of Aphanizomenon, commonly known as blue-green algae. Blue-green algae can produce dangerous toxins and be harmful to people, pets, and livestock. Those with liver or kidney damage are at an increased risk of illness.

Blue-green algae bacteria are naturally occurring and microscopic. Blue-green algae blooms occur in water with high levels of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen, often during warmer weather months. The blooms are generally green or blue-green in color, and may form thick mats along shorelines. They may look like surface scum, resembling pea soup and can have an unpleasant odor.

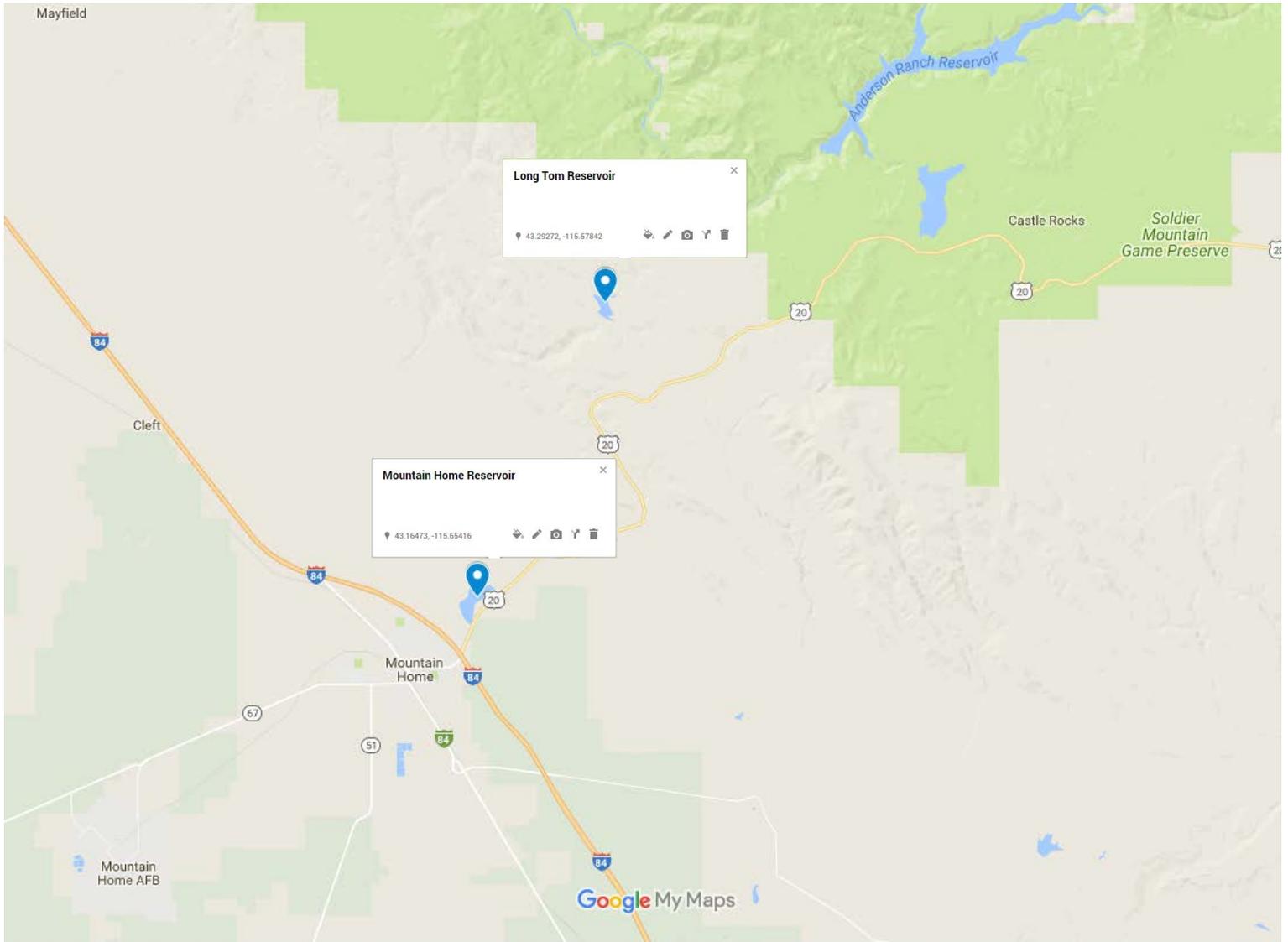
Samples taken at the Long Tom

and Mt. Home Reservoirs indicate bacteria counts that could make people and animals sick, so everyone should heed these precautions and avoid contact with the water:

- Humans, pets and livestock should not drink the reservoir water.
- Humans and animals should stay out of the reservoir water. Swimming, wading, or other activities with full body contact with the reservoir water should be avoided.
- Fish should be cleaned and rinsed with clean water. Only the fillet portion should be consumed. All other parts should be thrown out.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae.
- If reservoir water contacts skin or pet fur, wash with clean potable water as soon as possible.
- Areas of visible algae accumulation should be avoided.

(continued)

People exposed to water with high concentrations of blue-green algae may experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, skin irritation, allergic responses, liver damage, or neurotoxic reaction such as tingling fingers and toes. Symptoms in humans are rare but anyone with symptoms should seek medical attention. Boiling or filtering the water will not remove the blue-green algae toxins.



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