
Public Health Advisory

October 5, 2020



*Photo of Cascade Reservoir
Credit: Idaho DEQ*

Health advisory issued for Cascade Reservoir in Valley County

Valley County, ID - Central District Health (CDH) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) have issued a health advisory for **Cascade Reservoir** due to the presence of a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB).

DEQ has been monitoring the reservoir and a recent water sample indicates that concentrations of toxin-producing cyanobacteria are present. These cyanobacteria can be harmful to humans and animals, and those with liver or kidney damage are at an increased risk of illness.

Cyanobacteria are a natural part of Idaho's water bodies. When temperatures rise, their populations can bloom and toxic chemical compounds, or cyanotoxins, can be released into the water. Blooms can vary in appearance, and may look like mats, foam, spilled paint, or surface scum, and have a foul odor.

While blooms can be discovered in one area of recreational water, they can move around to different areas, water depths, and can change in severity. HABs are most common in the summer months through the fall.

When recreating near or in any surface water with a health advisory in effect, take the following precautions for yourself and pets:

- Avoid swimming, wading, or other activities. Take extra precautions to ensure children, pets, and livestock are not exposed to the water.
- Do not drink or cook with water containing a bloom. Boiling and filtering the water can increase the risk.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling fish caught in water experiencing a bloom. Cyanotoxins can accumulate in fish and the risk to people is being researched. Any fish caught should be cleaned and washed thoroughly in uncontaminated water and any internal organs disposed of before consumption. If people choose to eat fish from this area, filet the fish and remove all of the fat, skin, and organs before cooking.
- Clean with potable water as soon as possible if water contacts skin or pet fur.

Symptoms of Cyanotoxin Exposure

Symptoms of cyanotoxin exposure include rashes, hives, diarrhea, vomiting, coughing, and/or wheezing. More severe symptoms affecting the liver and nervous system may result from ingesting water. If symptoms persist, consult your healthcare provider. Wash your pet with clean water and shampoo if it has been around a harmful algal bloom. If it shows symptoms such as vomiting, staggering, drooling or convulsions, contact your vet immediately.

More Information / How to Report a Potential Harmful Algal Bloom

The public will be advised when water testing indicates a HAB is no longer likely to be a concern at Cascade Reservoir.

For information on cyanobacteria blooms and a map of recreational water quality health advisories in Idaho, visit www.deq.idaho.gov/recreation-health-advisories. Many harmful algal blooms are identified through public reporting. If you suspect a bloom on a recreational water body in Idaho, report it to DEQ at <https://cyanos.org/bloomwatch/>.

###

Contacts:

Public Health - Central District Health: Christine Myron, Public Information Officer | Central District Health
(208) 871-1712 | cmyron@cdh.idaho.gov

Water Quality – DEQ: Chase Cusack, Water Quality Analyst
(208) 373-0490