

For your information:

Monday, August 20, 2018

There has been a news release from **North Bay Parry Sound Health Unit** about blue-green algae found at the north end of our lake:

"For immediate release: August 16, 2018

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE FOUND IN SEVERAL LAKES THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT NORTH BAY, ON—

The Health Unit would like to advise the public that blue-green algae has been found in the following lakes:

- Rankin Lake (East area), Township of Seguin
- Pickerel Lake (South area), Township of Armour
- Three Mile Lake (North area), Township of Armour

To access a more detailed map of the sample locations, please visit the Health Unit website www.myhealthunit.ca/bluegreen

Because of the blue-green algae, immediately follow these safety measures:

- Do not use the water. This includes: drinking, cooking, bathing, brushing teeth, and water sports. Note: Using a private water system or boiling the water will NOT destroy the toxins.
- Keep pets away from the water.
- Do not swim where there is blue-green algae.
- Some toxins can build up in fish and shellfish. Do not eat the liver, kidneys and other organs. Be careful not to cut the organs when filleting. Limit the amount of fish flesh you eat.
- The blue-green algae may float or sink to the bottom of the lake and you may not see it.
- Even when blue-green algae has disappeared, toxins can remain in the water for a long time. • The Health Unit and the District Office of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks cannot confirm when the water is safe to use.

You can find out more about blue-green algae at myhealthunit.ca or by calling the Health Unit at 705- 474-1400, ext. 5400 or 1-800-563-2808.

Quick Facts • Cyanobacteria, also called blue-green algae or 'pond scum', are not really algae, but tiny bacteria. • Although usually hard to see, during hot weather they can grow rapidly to form a large mass, called a bloom. Blooms continually change and are difficult to predict. Wind, temperature or sunlight could change where the bloom is located in the water. • Dense blue-green algae blooms may make the water look bluish-green, or like green pea soup or turquoise paint. Very dense blooms may form solid-looking clumps. • Fresh blooms often smell like newly mown grass, while older blooms may smell like rotting garbage. • Even when a bloom has disappeared, toxins can persist in water bodies for a long time. Toxins can irritate the skin and, if swallowed, cause diarrhea and vomiting. At high enough levels, the toxins may cause liver and nervous system damage. • If skin contact does occur, wash with soap and water or rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove algae."

<http://www.armourtownship.ca/documents/notices/HEALTH%20UNIT/BGA2018.pdf>

If you see a suspected bloom, call the health unit at one of the above numbers.

The ministry of health also posted a sign at the south end of the lake about toxic algae.

Please note that the cyanobacteria that was found in the tested water sample was not from a "bloom."

For more information about blue-green algae and how to deal with it, see:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae>

Some quotes from that site are:

"Blue-green algae are not normally visible in the water, but populations can rapidly increase to form a large mass or scum called a bloom when conditions are favourable."

"If you spot it

Take a cautious approach, as some varieties of this algae can produce toxins that are harmful to both humans and animals.

If you suspect a blue-green algal bloom:

- assume toxins are present
- avoid using, drinking, bathing or swimming in the water
- restrict pet and livestock access to the water"

The Center for Disease Control, in the U. S., puts it this way:

"Avoid entering or playing in bodies of water that:

- smell bad
- look discolored
- have foam, scum, or algal mats on the surface
- contain or are near dead fish or other dead animals"