

ADVISORY

Pyramid Lake is currently experiencing a harmful algal bloom (HAB). HABs occur naturally in bodies of water in all 50 states. While many factors may contribute to HABs, such as nutrients, sunlight, warm temperatures and calm water, how these factors come together to create a “bloom” of algae is not well understood. HABs can produce toxins harmful to people and pets when they contact affected water. The *Volunteer Statewide Guidance for Blue-Green Algae Blooms* recommends the following:

- Avoid contact, including wading, swimming and skiing, with water that is visibly discolored or contains blooms, algal scums or mats. Contact with contaminated water may cause skin irritation, and ingestion of contaminated water may cause illness.
- If you or your pets come in contact with the water, rinse off with clean water as soon as possible. Use warm, soapy water where available. Remove clothing to avoid contact with trapped algal cells.
- Always warn young children not to swallow any lake water, whether or not you see signs of algae.
- Avoid boating over mats of algae to prevent accidental inhalation or ingestion of spray.
- If you choose to consume fish caught in the lake, remove the guts and liver and rinse fillets in tap water before eating.

Other activities near the water such as picnicking and hiking are safe. Because algal blooms can form and die off fairly rapidly, the California Department of Water Resources will continue to monitor the water quality in Pyramid Lake.

Additional information on HABs can be found on the State Water Resources Control Board website:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/bluegreen_algae/

