



**District Health
Department #10**

Healthy People, Healthy Communities



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POSSIBLE HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOM DETECTED ON HESS LAKE IN NEWAYGO COUNTY

June 28, 2024 – District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) in cooperation with Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) have reported that algae blooms were detected on Hess Lake in Newaygo County.

A resident reported a bloom on Hess Lake Thursday, June 26, 2024. The DHD#10 then collected samples and submitted them for testing to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Algae blooms can form when there are high nutrient levels within bodies of water along with warm temperatures. Signs will be posted near the boat launch of the lake to notify individuals to avoid contact with the water in that area as a precautionary measure.

“Not all algal blooms have cyanotoxins, so it is difficult to tell if it is harmful by looking at it. Harmful algae blooms can be a variety of colors and look like scum in the water with small flecks, like globs and mats, or like spilled paint with a green sheen on the surface,” stated Meghan Stih, Environmental Health Supervisor for DHD#10. “The algal toxins that are released can be harmful to aquatic life, pets, and humans, so it is very important to avoid these areas.”

Below are some steps to take when near waterways:

- Avoid direct contact with waterways that appear to be scummy or have a green shade to them
- Do not drink untreated surface water
- Obey posted signage for public health advisories and/or beach closings
- Limit or avoid eating fish from algal bloom impacted areas

Contact with algae blooms can cause minor illness in humans but can be fatal to pets. Therefore, it is also recommended that people keep their pets out of the water that shows any signs of algae blooms.

People and pets can experience the following symptoms after exposure to algae blooms:

- Rash, hives, or skin blisters at the contact site
- Runny eyes and/or nose, sore throat, asthma-like symptoms, or allergic reactions
- Diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, weakness, tingly fingers, numbness, dizziness, difficulty breathing, or even death resulting from ingesting contaminated water

If you think that you or your pet have been exposed to algae blooms, take the following precautions:

- Immediately remove yourself and/or your pet from the area
- Take a shower and thoroughly rinse off pets with clean, fresh water if they swam in an area with algae blooms to avoid potential toxic ingestion from licking between paws or affected areas