

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

September 10, 2021

Possible blue-green algae in Kenora

There have been reports of algae blooms in both Spruce Lake and at Anicinabe Beach in Kenora. The blooms are being tested by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to see if they are blue-green algae. At this time, the results are not known, so Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) asks that people treat it as though it is blue-green algae.

Blue-green algae are microscopic organisms that are naturally present in lakes and streams. They are usually present in low numbers but can rapidly increase in certain conditions to form a large mass or scum, called a bloom. Some blue-green algae produce toxins that can pose a health risk to people and animals when they are exposed to them in large amounts.

When blue-green algae blooms are present, it is important to avoid drinking the water, swimming in it, and using it for bathing or other household purposes. Residential water treatment systems may not remove toxins and should not be relied on during a bloom event. Do not boil the water, as this can cause an increase in toxin levels. Municipally treated water supplies can be used normally unless you are notified otherwise.

People and pets should avoid contact with water that has been recently impacted by a blue green algae bloom, is discoloured or has scum on the surface. If contact does occur, wash with soap and water or rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove algae.

It is recommended to wait at least two weeks after the bloom has disappeared before resuming the normal use of lake waters.

Anyone who sees a bloom should report it to the Spills Action Centre at **1-866-MOETIPS (6638477)**.

For more information on blue-green algae blooms, follow the links below:

- [Information about Blue-Green Algae – Ministry of Environment](#)
- [Reported Blue-Green Algae Blooms - NWHU](#)

If you have questions, please contact NWHU at 1-800-830-5978 to speak with a public health inspector.

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