



LIVINGSTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Personal and Preventive Health Services

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Environmental Health Services

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September 7, 2023

Dear Woodland Lake Residents,

Recently, a Woodland Lake resident noticed what appeared to be streaks of spilled paint on the lake and contacted Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). Livingston County Health Department (LCHD), in coordination with the resident, collected a sample on September 5, 2023. This sample tested positive for cyanobacteria, a harmful algal bloom containing toxins. It is advised that people and their pets avoid areas of scum in the water, water that looks like spilled paint, or water that looks green. Unless the bloom covers a large portion of the lake, people can limit their exposure by using an unaffected part of the lake.

The positive tests were located along a small section of shoreline, but everyone should be on the lookout for signs of the algae before entering the water or allowing pets in the lake. The appearance of algae is not unusual in the summer and fall and has been appearing in a growing number of Michigan lakes. You should be on the lookout for the presence of visible algae or scum on any lake.

Cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae, has been found on Woodland Lake, having the appearance of a light green scum and streaks of spilled paint. Cyanobacteria is naturally occurring and common in many lakes. When conditions are right, such as plenty of nutrients, warm temperatures, sunlight, and relatively calm conditions, the cyanobacteria can bloom. Unfortunately, these bacteria can produce toxins, called cyanotoxins, that can make humans and animals sick when swallowed. Dogs are especially susceptible.

Swallowing the water can make humans and animals feel sick – do not swallow lake water while swimming. Humans can have an allergic reaction to the algae when it contacts their skin. If you need to enter the water where algae are present, rinse off as soon as possible. Dogs which come in contact with lake water should be rinsed off as soon as possible.

If you, your children, or your animals become sick after contact with the water, call your doctor or veterinarian. Please also report any illnesses you or your family may have experienced related to this lake to Livingston County Health Department at 517-546-9850. Animal illnesses should be reported to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Animal Industry Division (AID), at 800-292-3939.

The algae sample, collected on September 5, 2023, looked like the picture included on page 2 of this document.

Sincerely,

Heather Blair, MS, PEM, REHS

Director of Environmental Health/Deputy Health Officer

