

ATTENTION CAMPERS!

Some varieties of Blue-Green Algae produce toxins that can pose a health risk to humans and animals when they are present in large quantities.

What are Blue- Green Algae? They are plant-like bacteria that are naturally present in lakes and streams and do not normally pose a health risk when present in low numbers. However, when warm, sunlit, nutrient enriched waters are present, these algae can become abundant, and may discolor the water, creating blooms of green paint-like material, or floating rafts (scums) on the surface of the water.

What are the Health Risks? Some species of Blue-Green Algae produce toxins that pose a health risk when either surface scums or water containing high levels of the algae are swallowed, come in contact with the skin, or airborne droplets are inhaled. Health effects include: irritation of the skin, eyes, nose and throat, and inflammation of the respiratory tract. The ingestion of water containing high levels of Blue-Green toxins has been associated with effects on the liver and nervous system of laboratory animals, and more importantly humans and pets.

Play it safe! Expect that noxious Blue-Green Algae are present when the lake water is strongly discolored, or has patches of surface scum. Observed colors can include green, blue-green, brown or red. Avoid contact with localized lake waters exhibiting these conditions until it naturally clears up.