



Cowlitz County Health Department

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News Release

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Warning Signs Posted Again for Silver Lake

Cowlitz County's Health Department is posting cautionary signs at Level 1 of 3, around Silver Lake. Environmental health specialists from the health department who were doing routine monitoring discovered the return of cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae. The Level 1 cautionary signs will inform the public that "toxic algae may be present". Dr. Jennifer Vines, Cowlitz County Health Officer assures that, "the lake is not closed. We are just advising residents of the potential risks".

Toxin results are expected between tomorrow and next week. If Toxin levels are above the World Health Organization (WHO), safety thresholds, Cowlitz County Health Department will post much stronger warning signs recommending to stay out of the lake. Dr. Vines reported that once algae levels remain below the WHO's safety threshold for at least two weeks, the cautionary signs will be removed.

Toxins ingested by human or animals (by swallowing the water) can cause neurologic-like paralysis and liver damage, which can manifest as nausea, vomiting, or abdominal pains.

There have been no reports of illness of humans or animals from contact with Silver Lake. Fish are safe to eat as long as the digestive organs are removed.

If you have physical symptoms, please see a health care provider. More information on algae can be found at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/algae>.

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