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Algae in the Lakes Region

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Cyanobacteria is in bloom early this year, and that's not good for lakegoers' health, the environment or the

Cyanobacteria blooms, also called blue-green algae, can make people and animals sick and block sunlight from reaching plants and animals that need to live. They usually appear in August, when lake water is warmer, according to Pat Tarpey, executive director of the Winnepesaukee Association. Public health advisories recently were issued at Ellacoya State Park in Gilford and Lake Opechee in Laconia warning of the potentially toxic bacteria at the two Lakes Region beaches.

Those advisories since have been lifted, but a new advisory was issued for Keyser Pond in Henniker on Wednesday.

When fecal bacteria or cyanobacteria counts at designated public beaches are higher than the state standards, the state puts out an advisory.

Exposure to cyanotoxins can cause damage to the liver, kidney and central nervous system and irritate the skin, according to the DES. Symptoms include cramps, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, fever, sore throat, headache and muscle and joint pain.

Cyanobacteria poses a risk not only to swimmers' health, but to the health of the region's economy, especially when it affects the state's largest lake.

"This is your bread and butter, this is your

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