



BLUE-GREEN ALGAE CAN BE TOXIC

Please report it when you notice it on our lake

It has been hot the last week and that could potentially be a recipe for formations of blue-green algae in our waters. Public health agencies across Canada have been working overtime this summer to educate the public about the proliferation of blue-green algae, otherwise known as cyanobacteria blooms. Blue-green algae can be toxic and highly resistant to treatment. In some areas of our province, blue-green algae has impacted some of its lakes. This summer it has been reported in the Muskoka's.

If you think you see it in Wolfe Lake, please let us know ASAP by sending us an email to com-wolfelake@outlook.com.

Although blue-green algae blooms are – luckily – rare in Wolfe Lake, last summer (2020) one of our members reported an issue with blue green algae. It was there for a very short period of time. The Kingston District of the Ministry of Environment (Conservation and Parks) came in and took a sample. It was confirmed blue-green algae. Fortunately for Wolfe Lake, the levels were only 5 percent of the so-called 'recreational limits', which resulted in no further testing or research.

What is it?

Blue-green algae are microscopic, plant-like organisms that occur naturally in ponds, rivers, lakes and streams. Although often blue-green, they can also be olive-green or red.

Normally blue-green algae are not visible in the water, but when conditions are favourable, algal populations can rapidly increase to form a large mass or scum in the water called a bloom. Blooms most commonly occur during the warmer weather of late summer and early fall.

Blue-green algae thrive in areas where the water is shallow, slow moving and warm, but they may also be present in deeper, cooler water. One key factor affecting the growth of blue-green algae is the amount of available nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. In Ontario water bodies, phosphorus tends to be the nutrient that controls how much algae can grow.

Report blue-green algae blooms

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) records the occurrence of blue-green blooms in Ontario. Of course, you can directly report the occurrence to MECP by calling the Spills Action Centre at:

1-800-268-6060 or 1 416-325-3000

Provide – if possible - pictures and/or a description of any suspected blooms. In your description, please provide as much information as possible about the location of the suspected bloom.

Still, if you think you see a bloom developing, please also contact the Wolfe Lake Association. It's important that we are aware of any occurrences of blue-green algae in our lake. Alternatively, we can also help you and report it for you to MECP, and inform our local public health units. Of our two townships as well.

Want to know more?

For more information on blue-green algae, and how to prevent it, please review the MECP fact sheet:

www.ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae

(also attached to your email).

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