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Public Urged To Avoid Algal Bloom in Pyramid Lake

SACRAMENTO – A large algal bloom has developed in Pyramid Lake, located in Los Angeles County, and the public is advised to avoid body contact with the water and take precautions during recreation at the lake.

Activities near the water such as picnicking and hiking are safe. Because these blooms can form and die off fairly rapidly, DWR has increased its monitoring of the water quality in Pyramid Lake throughout the summer recreation season and will update this advisory if conditions change.

The following precautions are based on the *Voluntary Statewide Guidance for Blue-Green Algae Blooms*:

- Avoid water contact, including wading, swimming and water-skiing.
- If you come in contact with the water, rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible.
- Do not allow dogs to drink or go into the water or eat scum on the shoreline.
- Do not drink or cook with lake water. Boiling or filtering the water will not remove the toxins.
- Avoid boating over mats of algae to prevent accidental inhalation or ingestion of spray.
- Eating fish or shellfish caught in the lake is not recommended. If you choose to consume fish, remove the guts and liver and rinse fillets in tap water before eating the fish.
- Always warn young children not to swallow any lake water, whether or not you see signs of algae.
- If you or your pet get sick after going in the water, contact your doctor or veterinarian.

Sunlight, warm temperatures, nutrients in the water and calm conditions contribute to algal blooms, which are considered to be harmful if they produce toxins that can affect people and pets when they contact affected water.

People can be exposed to the toxins when they accidentally ingest water while swimming or waterskiing. The toxins can also contact the skin during swimming or be inhaled if they become aerosolized, such as during waterskiing or jet skiing.

Exposure to high concentrations of these toxins can cause skin rashes, eye, nose, mouth or throat irritation, headache and gastrointestinal upset. Dogs can also become ill if they ingest the water or lick their fur after contacting the affected water.

Additional information on harmful algal blooms can be found on the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/cyanoHab_network/index.html.

Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

