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Blue-Green Algal Bloom Persists in Pyramid Lake; No-Swimming Advisory Remains in Effect

SACRAMENTO – The cyanobacteria (blue-green) algal bloom that was first detected in Pyramid Lake in late June is continuing, according to the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Recent sampling for microcystin toxins in the water showed levels high enough for DWR to continue its warning to the public to not swim in the lake until further notice.

Warning signs posted at the lake's beaches remain in place. However, activities near the water such as picnicking and hiking are safe. Because these blooms can form and die off fairly rapidly, DWR continues to test the water and will update this advisory if conditions change.

Based on current testing results, the following precautions from the *Voluntary Statewide Guidance for Blue-Green Algae Blooms* remain in effect:

- 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 become 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.

