



July 14, 2017

Contact:

Doug Carlson (916) 653-5114

Information Officer

Ted Thomas (916) 653-9712

Information Officer

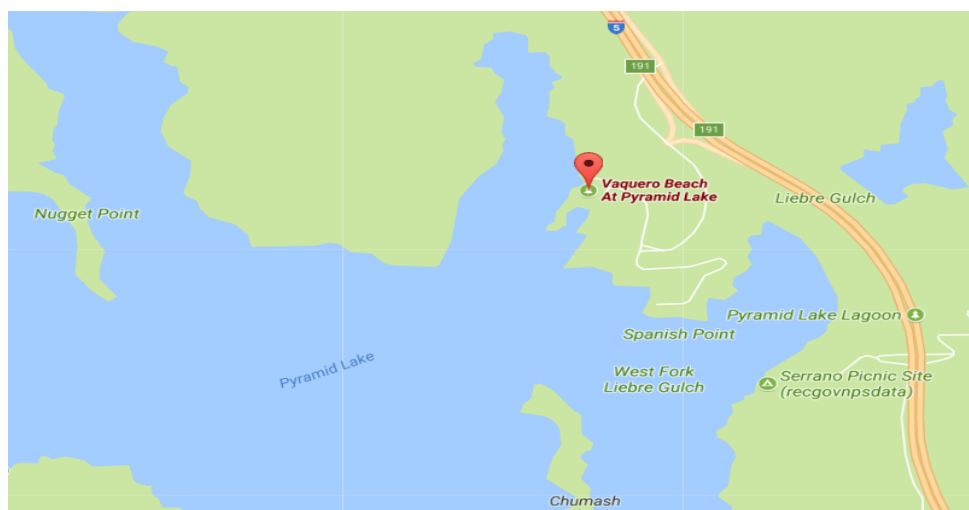
Pyramid Lake Algal Bloom Now at ‘Caution’ Level; Toxin Level Lower than Last Week

Sacramento – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has detected a reduced amount of microcystins at Pyramid Lake’s Vaquero Day Use Swim Beach. The level now warrants a “Caution” to swimmers rather than the “Warning” that was issued at the lake on July 7. While swimming is now allowed, all recreational users are still urged to avoid direct contact with blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) in Pyramid Lake in Los Angeles County.

Water from the beach at the Vaquero Day Use Area was tested using a field test kit on July 6 and showed a reading of 10 micrograms of microcystins per liter, a level that prompted a “Warning” health advisory and the closure of the swim area. However, laboratory testing of a sample taken on July 11 at Vaquero Swim Beach found 1.13 micrograms/liter, a level that prompts “Caution” signs to be posted.

The Vaquero Day Use Area remains open for picnicking and shoreline activities, and the swim beach has been reopened; swimmers should avoid contact with blue-green algae. A “Caution” advisory issued last week remains in effect for the entire lake.

Bloom conditions can change rapidly, and wind and waves may move or concentrate the bloom into different regions of the lake. “Caution” signs have been posted at locations around the lake.



The algal bloom can appear as blue-green, white or brown foam, scum or mats that can float on the water’s surface and accumulate along the shoreline and boat ramp area.

Blue-green algae can pose health risks, particularly to children and pets. Visitors to Pyramid Lake are urged to choose safe water activities while recreating there. They should avoid swimming and ingesting the water in the Vaquero Beach bloom area and avoid ingesting the water elsewhere in the lake. Pets should be kept away from the water in all areas under advisory.

Recreational exposure to toxic blue-green algae can cause eye irritation, allergic skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea, and cold and flu-like symptoms. Pets can be especially susceptible because they tend to drink while in the water and lick their fur afterwards.

The [Statewide Guidance on Cyanobacteria and Harmful Algal Blooms](#) recommends the following for waters impacted by blue-green algae:

- Take care that pets and livestock do not drink the water, swim through algae, scums or mats or lick their fur after going in the water. Rinse pets in clean water to remove algae from fur.
- Avoid wading, swimming or jet or water skiing in water containing algae blooms or scums or mats.
- Do not drink, cook or wash dishes with untreated surface water from these areas under any circumstances; common water purification techniques such as camping filters, tablets and boiling do not remove toxins.
- People should not eat mussels or other bivalves collected from these areas. Limit or avoid eating fish from these areas; if fish are consumed, remove the guts and liver, and rinse filets in clean drinking water.
- Get medical treatment immediately if you think that you, your pet or livestock might have been poisoned by blue-green algae toxins. Be sure to alert the medical professional to the possible contact with blue-green algae. Also, make sure to contact the local county public health department.

For more information, please visit:

California Department of Public Health:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/environhealth/water/Pages/Bluegreenalgae.aspx>

State Water Resources Control Board - California CyanoHAB Network:

http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/cyanoHab_network/index.html

CA Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment: Information on Microcystin

<http://oehha.ca.gov/ecotoxicology/general-info/information-microcystins>

US Environmental Protection Agency: CyanoHAB website

<https://www.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanoHabs>

#####

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

