

# If in doubt, **stay out.**

Nevada's rivers and lakes are fun, safe places for water recreation, but always be on the lookout for evidence of harmful algal blooms. If the conditions are right, naturally occurring algae can rapidly bloom and become toxic. Avoid blooms because exposure can make you or your family sick — it can kill pets, livestock, and wildlife.

## WHAT IS THIS STUFF?

*Toxic algal blooms are not actually algae. They're made of billions of tiny organisms—called cyanobacteria—that release toxins when they die.*



POISON CONTROL HELP LINE:

**1-800-222-1222**

### REPORT HUMAN ILLNESS    REPORT ANIMAL ILLNESS

NV Department of Health  
and Human Services

**1-775-400-0333**

NV Department of  
Agriculture

**1-775-353-3709**

### REPORT A SUSPECTED BLOOM

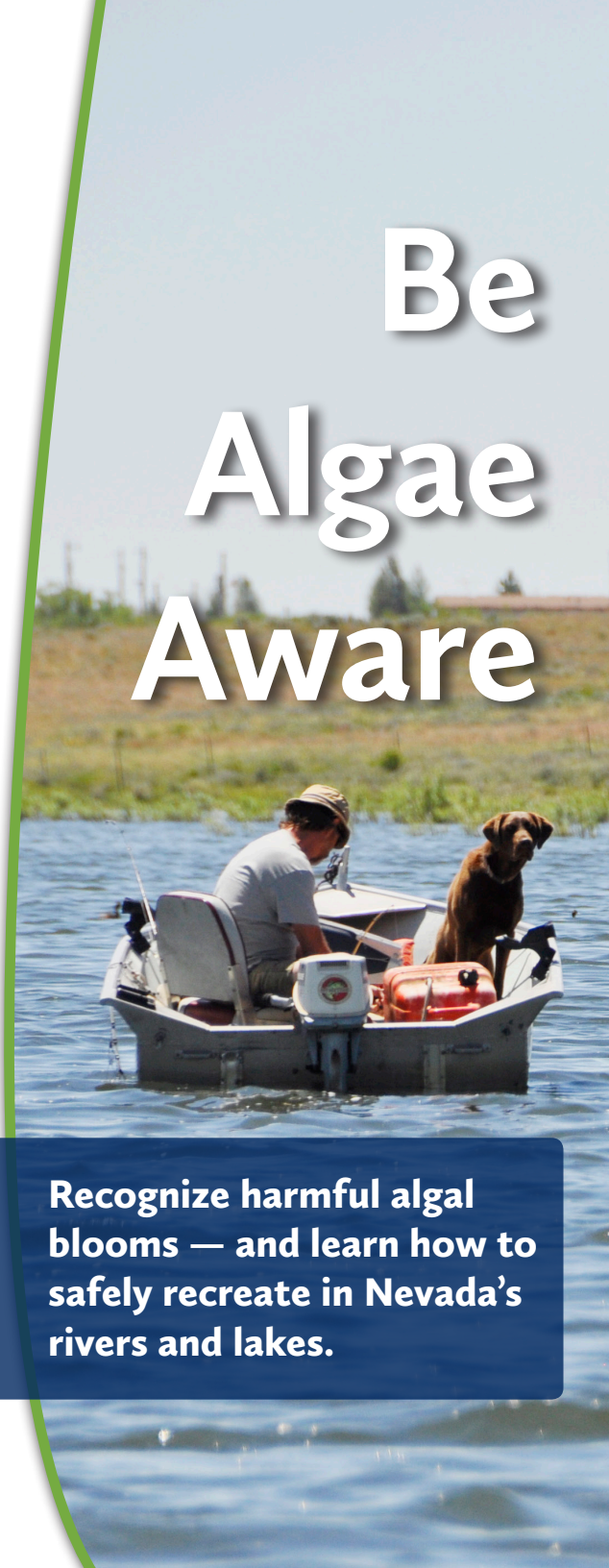
NV Division of Environmental  
Protection

**1-888-331-6337**



*This brochure was produced in collaboration with the above agencies by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, an agency within the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.*

# Be Algae Aware



**Recognize harmful algal blooms — and learn how to safely recreate in Nevada's rivers and lakes.**

# Learn what to avoid

Algal blooms can occur at any time of year but are most common in the summer when water is warm and stagnant.

## It may be a harmful algal bloom if...

✓ It **smells** rotten



✓ The water looks like **paint**



✓ Large **mats** or **scums** are floating on the surface



✓ There are **bright colors** like blue, green, white, brown, or red



# Take precautions

You, your family, and your pets can be exposed to toxic algae by touching, swallowing, or inhaling affected water. This can happen through water recreation, drinking water, or household use.



**DON'T**  
Play in water during a bloom



**DON'T**  
Swim or recreate in water during a bloom



**DON'T**  
Allow pets to play in or drink water during a bloom



**DON'T**  
Drink, cook with, or wash dishes with affected water

# Know the risks

Exposure to harmful algal blooms can lead to mild or potentially serious health issues. Children, pets, and livestock are especially at risk.

**If you are exposed:** Rinse off yourself, children, and animals with clean water if exposed to algae, scums, or discolored water. Stop using the water and consider medical help if people or animals have symptoms after touching, swallowing, or inhaling the bad water.

## Human Symptoms

Diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, muscle cramps, hives/rashes, trouble breathing, and skin, eye, or throat irritation

## Animal Symptoms

Weakness, fatigue, excessive salivation or drooling, staggering, difficulty breathing, vomiting, convulsions, and death

Learn more by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov/habs/](http://www.cdc.gov/habs/).

# Can I eat the fish?

Fish can collect algal toxins in their bodies, but fish in Nevada likely have lower levels because blooms are irregular. If you decide to eat a fish you catch during a bloom, wash it carefully with clean water — and only eat the fillets! Throw skin and internal organs in the trash, which have higher levels of algal toxins.

