

# Be Algae Aware



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.

## Take precautions

You, your family, and your pets can be exposed to toxic algae by touching, swallowing, or inhaling affected water.



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



**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** Play in water during a bloom

## 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.

## 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.



## 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. Rinse off yourself, children, and animals with clean water if exposed to algae, scums, or discolored water.

### Effects on People

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

### Effects on Animals

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

## 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



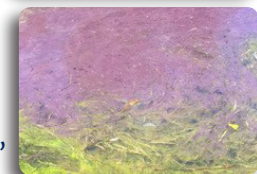
The water looks like **paint**



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



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



## Learn more

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [www.cdc.gov/habs/](http://www.cdc.gov/habs/)

