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News Releases

Suspected Algae Bloom in Lake Ainslie

Health Promotion and Protection/Environment

September 22, 2009 5:30 PM

The Department of Environment is investigating a suspected algae bloom in Lake Ainslie, Inverness Co. Toxins produced by some algae can affect health.

People should not drink the water or use it to prepare or cook food, or to brush teeth.

Boiling the water will not eliminate potential toxins.

Water samples are being tested now to determine if the suspected algae is a type that emits toxins.

Department inspectors have notified businesses that serve the public to not use lake water.

Ingesting water containing toxins from algae can cause stomach ache, diarrhea, vomiting and nausea.

Swimming, bathing, showering with the water is not advised. Pets and livestock should not be permitted to swim in, or drink, the water.

Direct contact with toxins from algae can cause skin and eye irritation. The health risk is fairly low, but if symptoms persist after a few days, you should consult a physician.

People should also avoid consuming the internal organs of fish taken from the lake.

Algae blooms occur naturally in water that is high in nutrients such as phosphate and nitrate. The cause of the suspected bloom is not known at this time.

Tests results on lake water samples are not expected to be complete for two weeks. Surface water is never recommended as a drinking water source unless properly filtered, disinfected and monitored.

For more information, read the fact sheet on the Department of Environment website at

www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/docs/BlueGreenAlgae.pdf

or call the local department of Environment office at 902-625-0791.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

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Boiling the water will not eliminate potential toxins. Water samples are being tested now to determine if the suspected algae is a type that emits toxins.

A fact sheet about algae is located on the Department of Environment's website.

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Page last updated 2010-09-03.

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