



# Media Release

## **News Release**

California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region  
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<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast>

## **Blue-green algae blooms result in warning against water contact or use at Iron Gate and Copco Reservoirs on the Klamath River**

**News Release: July 1, 2016**

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**Sacramento** –Swimmers, boaters and recreational users are urged to avoid direct contact with, or use of waters containing blue-green algae (cyanobacteria), now blooming in the Copco and Iron Gate Reservoirs on the Klamath River in Northern California.

The reservoirs are now posted with health advisories warning against human and animal contact with the water. Cyanobacteria conditions in the Klamath River below the reservoirs remain below the advisory levels and have not been posted. Residents and recreational water users can still enjoy camping, hiking, biking, canoeing, picnicking, or other recreational activities at the reservoirs while taking precautions to avoid contact with waters near these bloom areas and any scums along the water's edge. In addition, the State of Oregon has posted Howard's Bay Park on Upper Klamath Lake located in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Below is a summary of this season's cyanobacteria advisory posting actions within the Klamath Basin to date:

**June 27th, 2016- Iron Gate Reservoir** - Counts of toxin-producing algae in water samples collected on June 20, 2016 in Iron Gate Reservoir are above the State of California's Recommended Threshold for Recreational Waters for harmful algae blooms. Iron Gate Reservoir exceeds the [Caution Action Trigger](#) and has been posted for the protection of public health.

**June 24th, 2016 - Copco Reservoir**- The sample results collected June 8, 2016 from Copco Reservoir at Copco Cove do not meet the State of California's Recommended Threshold for Recreational Waters for harmful algae blooms. Copco Reservoir exceeds the [Caution Action Trigger](#) and has been posted for the protection of public health.



**June 24th, 2016 - Howard's Bay in Upper Klamath Lake-** The sample results collected June 14, 2016 from Upper Klamath Lake at Howard's Bay Park does not meet the State of Oregon's [public health advisory threshold](#) for harmful algae blooms. A Public Health Advisory has been issued for Howard's Bay.

Water quality monitoring is done biweekly in the summer from Link River Dam in Oregon to the Klamath River estuary in California. Sampling continues late into the fall to determine when toxin levels are below the public health thresholds, and water contact is safe. This sampling is conducted collaboratively by: the United States Bureau of Reclamation, PacifiCorp, the Karuk Tribe, the Yurok Tribe, the California North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and United States Environmental Protection Agency. These postings within California are supported by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the California Department of Public Health, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Yurok and Karuk Tribes.

The algal blooms appear as bright green in the water, and blue-green, white or brown foam, scum or mats that can float on the water and accumulate along the shore. Recreational exposure to toxic blue-green algae can cause eye irritation, allergic skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea, and cold and flu-like symptoms. Liver failure, nerve damage and death have occurred in rare situations where large amounts of contaminated water were directly ingested.

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

- 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 (e.g., 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; if fish are consumed, remove 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.

Water users are encouraged to check the most recent sampling results on the Klamath Blue-Green Algae Tracker (see link below). Even when blue-green algae blooms are not present, still carefully watch young children and warn them not to swallow the water.

**For more information, please visit:**



Klamath Blue-Green Algae Tracker

<http://www.kbmp.net/maps-data/blue-green-algae-tracker>

California Department of Public Health:

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

State Water Resources Control Board

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/bluegreen\\_algae/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/bluegreen_algae/)

CA Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment:

<http://oehha.ca.gov/ecotox/microcystins.html>

US Environmental Protection Agency

<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/standards/criteria/nutrients/cyanohabs.cfm>

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