



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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People urged to avoid algal blooms in eastern North Carolina waters

RALEIGH – State officials continue to urge people to avoid contact with potentially harmful algal blooms that have formed in the Albemarle Sound due to hot weather.

Staff in the N.C. Division of Water Resources' Washington Regional office have tracked and evaluated the blooms as they have been reported by residents. North Carolina has had no reports of adverse health effects in people associated with these algal blooms, which have formed in recent months covering coves, open water and along shorelines in the Albemarle Sound.

While it is safe to boat or fish in the affected areas, the N.C. Division of Public Health routinely encourages the public to avoid contact with large accumulations of the algae and prevent children and pets from swimming or ingesting water in an algal bloom.

State health and water quality officials reiterate the following steps to safeguard pets and children from any potentially harmful algal bloom:

- Keep children and pets away from water that appears bright green, discolored or scummy.
- Do not handle or touch large mats of algae.
- Avoid handling, cooking or eating dead fish that may be present.
- If you come into contact with an algal bloom, wash thoroughly. Also, use clean water to rinse off pets that may have come into contact with an algal bloom.
- If your child appears ill after being in waters containing an algal bloom, seek medical care immediately.
- If your pet appears to stumble, stagger or collapse after being in a pond, lake or river, seek veterinary care immediately.

For more information on the potential health effects from algal blooms, visit the N.C. Division of Public Health's website at: <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/oe/algae/protect.html>. To learn more about algae, visit the N.C.

Division of Water Resources' website at: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/ess/eco/blooms>.

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