



Media Release

Harmful Cyanobacteria Detected in Parts of Lake Shasta; Caution Urged with Contact through Labor Day Weekend

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REDDING – State and federal environmental and land management agencies have joined together to urge boaters and recreational users to exercise caution when enjoying certain parts of Lake [Shasta](#) through the Labor Day weekend.

On August 9, scientists working with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board conducted cyanobacteria monitoring at the lake, including sites in the Squaw Creek Arm and the Silverthorn and Jones Valley Resort areas. The cyanobacterial toxin, Anatoxin-a, was detected at all of the monitoring sites. Monitoring sites and toxin concentrations are identified in the attached map.

The concentration of the toxin is low and does not pose a threat to people swimming in the water. However, ingestion of algal material, scums and mats could be dangerous.

Children should be kept away from algae in the water and on the shore. Do not let children play in areas that have any algae-related material and do not let them put any algae in their mouths.



This photo illustration shows the most common way dogs can be exposed to an algae bloom.

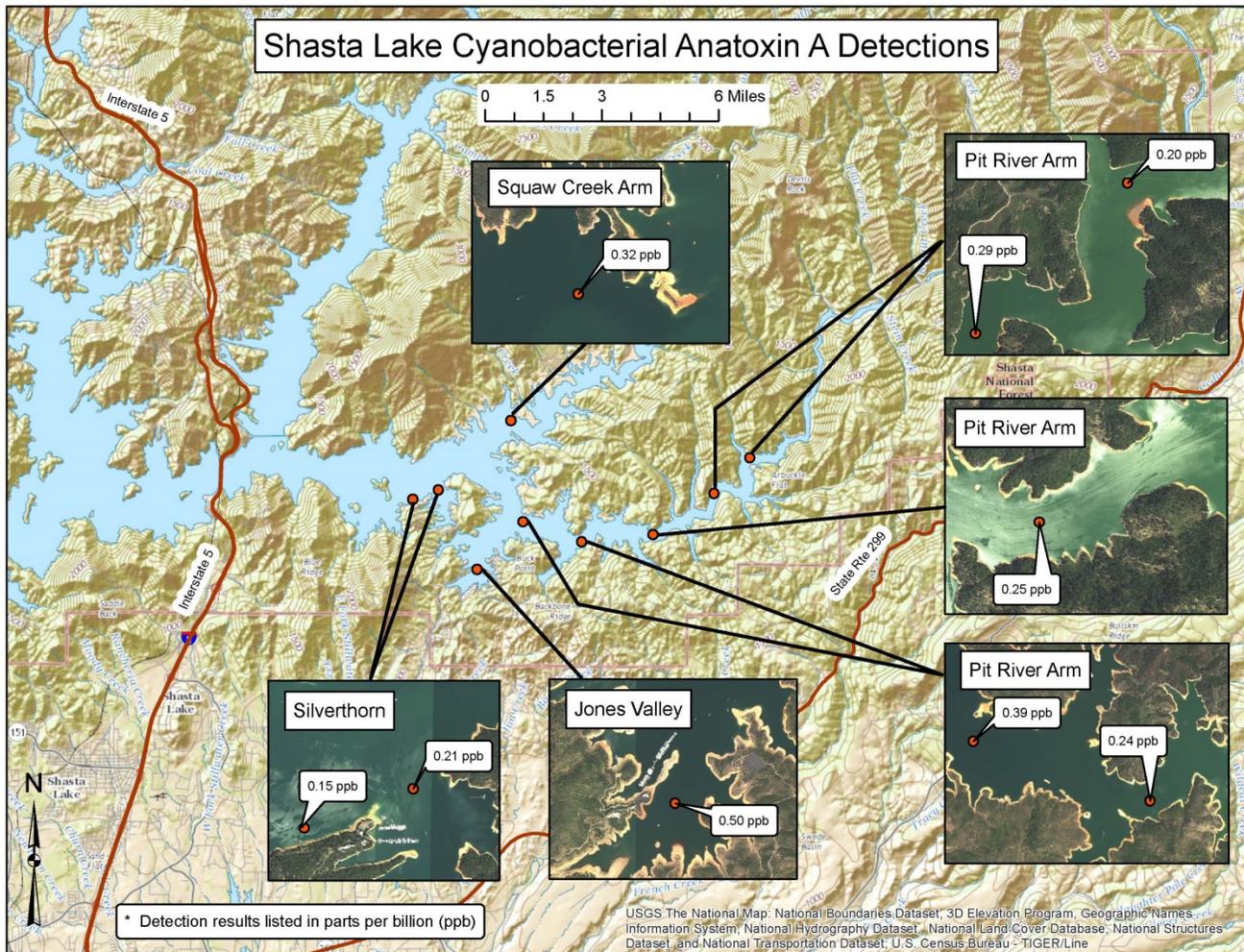
The most high-risk groups are dogs and livestock as they eat the algae and drink the water. Dog deaths have occurred in California every year from algae blooms, so keep your pets out of the water and away from algal mats and scum accumulated on the shore. If they do swim in the water, they should be rinsed off with fresh water to remove any algae from their fur.

Postings Are In Place

Signs warning about the presence of harmful cyanobacteria are currently being posted by the U. S. Forest Service and the Central Valley Water Board at boat launches, marinas and popular lake access locations.



Algal toxins can be present even though a bloom is not visible. Cyanobacteria blooms can appear as bright green with white or brown foam, scum or mats that can float on the water's surface and accumulate along the shoreline and boat ramp areas. Bloom conditions can change rapidly, and wind and waves may move or concentrate the bloom into different regions of Lake Shasta, or even in the main parts of the lake where recreational boating is most likely to occur. Not all areas of the lake have been tested for harmful cyanobacteria. As reports come in of algae formations, State Water Board staff will follow up with appropriate tests.



Recreational exposure to cyanobacteria and associated toxins can cause eye irritation, skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea and cold and flu-like symptoms. Pets can be especially susceptible because they tend to drink while in the water and lick their fur after.

Lake Is Open for Public Use and Access

People are still encouraged to come to Lake Shasta and enjoy activities at the Lake. However, we recommend that water users exercise healthy habits when playing in waters that have identified cyanobacteria blooms. The [Statewide Guidance on Cyanobacteria and Harmful Algal Blooms](#) recommends the following for waters impacted by cyanobacteria:

- Keep pets and livestock out of the water. Do not allow them to drink the water or eat algal material on shore. If they do get in the water, do not let them 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 and toxins from fur.
- Avoid areas of accumulated algae, scums or mats when wading, swimming, or jet or water skiing.
- Do not drink untreated surface water from these areas or use it for cooking; people should not eat mussels or other shell fish collected from these areas. Limit or avoid eating fish from these areas; if fish are consumed, remove the 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 cyanobacteria toxins. Be sure to alert the medical professional to the possible exposure with cyanobacteria. Also, make sure to contact the local county public health department.

Lake Shasta recreation, which boasts a 365-mile shoreline, is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The lake stores water to irrigate valley farms to the south; offers flood control; reduces the intrusion of ocean salt water from San Francisco Bay; provides water for towns and industries; and furnishes hydroelectric power.

For more information, please visit:

California Department of Public Health:

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

California Water Quality Monitoring Council – Harmful Algal Bloom Portal:

<http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/>

State Water Resources Control Board - California CyanoHAB Network:

http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/cyanohab_network/index.html

US Environmental Protection Agency: CyanoHAB website

<https://www.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs>

US Environmental Protection Agency: Anatoxin-a report

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/anatoxin-a-report-2015.pdf>

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