



# Media Release

**News Release**  
**California Regional Water Quality Control Board**  
**North Coast Region**  
**5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A**  
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## **Blue-green algae bloom triggers warning against water contact at Copco Reservoir on the Klamath**

**News Release:**  
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Swimmers, boaters and recreational users are urged to avoid direct contact with waters containing blue-green algae (cyanobacteria), now blooming in the Copco Reservoir on the Klamath River in Northern California.

Sample results collected June 27, 2017 from Copco Reservoir at Copco Cove do not meet the State of California's recommended threshold for blue –green algae toxins in recreational waters, resulting in the posting of the reservoir.

Copco Reservoir exceeds the "[warning](#)" threshold, and has been posted with public health alerts warning against human and animal contact with the water. Cyanobacteria conditions in the Klamath River below the reservoir remain below public health alert thresholds and have not been posted.

Residents and recreational water users can still enjoy camping, hiking, biking, canoeing, boating, fishing, 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.

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 CA North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

The posting within California is supported by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the California Department of Public Health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Yurok and Karuk tribes.

The blooms appear as bright green in the water, and blue-green, white or brown foam, scum or mats can float on the water and accumulate along the shore. Recreational exposure to blue-green algae



toxins 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.

State officials urge those recreating in blue-green algae impacted waters to follow the recommendations below:

- 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 or swimming 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 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>

My Water Quality – Are harmful algal blooms affecting our waters?

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

California Department of Public Health:

<https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/environhealth/water/Pages/Bluegreenalgae.aspx>

CA Cyanobacteria and Harmful Algal Bloom (CCHAB) Network:

[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:

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

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