



News Advisory

Caution urged after harmful algal blooms detected in North Coast rivers

Healthy water habits can help protect people and pets

August 26, 2026

Contact: Blair Robertson – Information Officer

SANTA ROSA – The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is advising visitors to use caution around several North Coast rivers where toxic algal mats have been found. The mats produce toxins that can make people and animals sick and pose a particular risk to children and dogs.

The North Coast Water Board is working with tribes and counties to monitor rivers for harmful algal blooms and mats, including the Klamath, Trinity, Salmon, Scott, Mad, Eel, South Fork Eel, Van Duzen, Navarro, Russian and East Fork Russian rivers.

Visual assessments and testing have confirmed potentially toxic algal mats in some of these waterways. The mats grow on the bottom of rivers but can break loose and float at the surface or wash up along the shoreline, where children and dogs can come into contact with or ingest them.

Visitors should:

- Avoid algae and algal mats in the water and along the shore.
- Keep children and pets away from algae and suspicious-looking water.
- Do not let pets drink the water or eat algae or algal mats.
- Wash people and pets with clean water after contact with river water.
- Follow all posted advisory signs.

The board is working with tribal and county partners to post Toxic Algae Alert signs at locations where mats have been found. Current advisory locations are available on the [California HAB Reports Web Map](#).



C A L I F O R N I A E N V I R O N M E N T A L P R O T E C T I O N A G E N C Y

S T A T E W A T E R R E S O U R C E S C O N T R O L B O A R D

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100 • www.waterboards.ca.gov



Algal mats can range in color from dark green to brown or black. Because conditions can change quickly, visitors should avoid suspicious-looking algae even in areas without posted signs. [A visual guide](#) is available to help identify and distinguish potentially toxic algal mats from other algae and aquatic plants.

The board encourages visitors to practice [Healthy Water Habits](#) whenever enjoying California lakes, rivers and streams. If any signs of illness develop in people after potential contact with a harmful algal bloom (HAB) or mat, contact your healthcare provider or the [California Poison Control System](#) and mention possible HAB exposure. Seek veterinary care immediately if your dog shows any [signs of illness](#) after potential contact with mats or HABs. Please also report any potentially HAB-related human or animal illness via the Bloom Report Form.

Additional information about staying safe around harmful algal blooms is available on the Healthy Water Habits webpage.

The board also works with partners to monitor harmful algal blooms that are in or float in the water at Lewiston, Trinity, Ruth, Mendocino and Pillsbury lakes and Big and Stone lagoons. Current advisories for these and other waterways are also available on the [California HAB Reports Web Map](#).

To report a bloom:

- Submit a Bloom Report at <https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/bloom-report/>
- Email CyanoHAB.Reports@waterboards.ca.gov.
- Call the HABs hotline at 1-844-729-6466.
- Contact your county public health department.

For more information, visit the [California Harmful Algal Blooms Portal](#).