



## Cowlitz County Health & Human Services Departments

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### Board of County Commissioners

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### NEWS RELEASE

#### Contact:

**Season Long, Environmental Health Manager  
360-414-5599, push 1, then extension 6445**

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**August 17, 2018**

## Signs Will Remain at Silver Lake

For the past several weeks, Cowlitz County's Health Department has posted Level 2 warning signs around Silver Lake after a sample for algae toxins came back above the acceptable level for recreational water. An algae bloom was discovered while routinely monitoring the lake. Samples tested for algae toxins the week of August 13 were below the acceptable level. Out of an abundance of caution, Level 2 signs will stay in place until tests show the toxins are below the acceptable level two weeks in a row.

Algae blooms are usually green and scummy, or give the water an overall green or blue-green color. Some species of algae produce toxins that can be harmful to humans and pets if they swallow or come into contact with the water. The Level 2 warning signs clearly state that people and animals should stay out of the water. Symptoms of exposure to certain algae toxins include stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, blurred vision, convulsions, or severe muscle and joint pains.

There have been no reports of illness in people or animals from contact with Silver Lake. Fish are safe to eat as long as they are cleaned well and the digestive organs are removed. Drinking water from public water systems or private wells in the areas around the lake is not affected by the lake water and is safe to drink. If you have physical symptoms, please see a health care provider.

The Cowlitz County Health Department will continue to monitor Silver Lake and will advise the public when water contact is considered safe again. Warning signs will be removed when toxin levels are confirmed below safety threshold for the second week in row. Outdoor enthusiasts are encouraged to visit local Parks and Recreation web sites for information on other parks and boat launches.

More information on algae can be found at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/algae>. To contact the Health & Human Services Departments, please call 360-414-5599.

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