



News Advisory

Caution recommended for Kaweah River recreation users about harmful algal blooms

July 29, 2022

Contact: Blair Robertson – [Public Information Officer](#)

Tulare County, Calif. – The State Water Resources Control Board, in coordination with Tulare County, continue to advise caution for anyone who recreates, swims or walks their dogs in the Kaweah River, where potentially toxic algal mats were recently discovered. Because children and dogs are most susceptible to serious health impacts, it is recommended they avoid touching any suspicious-looking algal material found in the water or along riverbank and follow [healthy water habits as described here](#).

Last week, reports of a potential harmful algae bloom (HAB) in recreational sites along the Kaweah River were received by the Tulare County Public Health Environmental Health Services Division (Tulare County) and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board).

Results from the ongoing investigation of this HAB are and will continue to be posted on the [California HAB Reports Web Map](#). The Three Rivers Community Service District has posted “[Toxic Algae Alert](#)” signs at recreational areas along the Kaweah River based on the Water Board’s statewide guidance. Recreational users are urged to be alert when recreating in the water. Tulare County and the Water Boards will provide regular updates to inform the community when postings are removed through the [California HAB Reports Web Map](#).

While some harmful algal blooms are caused by algae, that grows floating in the water, some harmful algae grows attached to the bottom surface of waterways and can form algal mats. Both types can produce toxins harmful to human and animal health. Check for algal mats before entering the river. If mats are present, children, dogs, and adults should avoid touching or swallowing any algal mat material in the water or on the riverbanks. In addition, dogs should not drink water directly from the rivers. If your dog is exposed, wash them immediately.

These recommendations are based on the potential health risks posed by the toxins that can be produced by algae. The potentially toxic algal mats can be found either attached to the bottom, floating in the water, or stranded on the riverbank. The appearance of algal mats ranges from bright to dull-green, orange, brown, and maroon material. [Learn what to look for using this visual guide](#). When in doubt, avoid touching algal mats.



The Water Boards recommend that people practice [healthy water habits](#) while enjoying the outdoors this summer at your local lake, river, or stream:

- Heed all instructions on posted advisories if present
- Avoid algae and scum in the water and on the shore
- Keep an eye on children and pets
- If you think a harmful algal bloom or toxic algal mats are present, do not let pets and other animals go into or drink the water or eat scum/algal mats on the shore
- Don't drink the water or use it for cooking
- Wash yourself, your family, and your pets with clean water after water play
- If you catch fish, throw away guts and clean fillets with tap water or bottled water before cooking
- Avoid eating shellfish if you think a harmful algal bloom is present

Get medical treatment immediately if you think that you, your pet, or livestock has gotten sick after going in the water or incidentally ingesting the mat material. Be sure to alert the medical professional to the possible contact with cyanobacteria. Also, make sure to contact the local county public health department.

To report a bloom, do one of the following:

- Fill out the [Bloom Report](#) form on the portal
- Email: CyanoHAB.reports@waterboards.ca.gov
- Call the HABs hotline: 1-844-729-6466 (toll free)

For more information about HABs, please visit:
[California Harmful Algal Blooms Portal](#)

For Media Inquiries, please email:

Blair Robertson

blair.robertson@waterboards.ca.gov

California Department of Public Health [Resource Page:](#)

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/EHIB/EAS/Pages/HABs.aspx>