



News Advisory

Warning issued for Kaweah River recreation users about harmful algal blooms

Warning signs posted as staff conducts tests at other sites

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Tulare County – The State Water Resources Control Board, in coordination with Tulare County, advises caution for anyone who boats, fishes or swims 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 riverbanks.

The [State Water Board's Freshwater and Estuarine Harmful Algal Bloom Program](#) notified the Tulare County Environmental Health Division that an algae bloom was reported at Skyline Pond in the town of Three Rivers. The site was tested shortly after by the land manager with the Bureau of Land Management. Algal mats also were observed in the Slick Rock area and about a mile west of Dinely Bridge.

Water Board staff will conduct further tests in these areas, with results 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 statewide guidance. Boaters and 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 on the [California HAB Reports Web Map](#).

While harmful algal blooms are caused by algal or cyanobacteria that grow floating in the water, some algae or cyanobacteria grow attached to the bottom surface of waterways and can form algal mats. If you see algal mats, the recommendation is for children, dogs, and adults to avoid touching or inadvertently 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 algal organisms, commonly cyanobacteria. 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. 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)
- Contact your County Environmental Health Office, 559-624-7400

For more information about HABs, please visit:

[California Harmful Algal Blooms Portal](#)

For Media Inquiries, please email:

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

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