



Public Health Administration

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Harmful Algal Bloom Suspected in Chico's Horseshoe Lake *Public Urged to Exercise Caution*

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – Butte County Environmental Health (BCEH) field staff have observed a potential cyanobacteria bloom occurrence at Horseshoe Lake in Chico. Out of an abundance of caution and until confirmatory lab results are available, residents, dog owners, and other recreational users are urged to avoid contact with the water.

BCEH will coordinate with the City of Chico Parks Division and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to perform a site assessment and collect water samples to identify any presence of harmful algal blooms (HABs) at Horseshoe Lake. The public will be notified of the results once they are available.

Algae and cyanobacteria, the organisms that cause HABs, have existed for billions of years as essential components of freshwater ecosystems. When certain conditions favor their growth – warm weather, stagnant water flows, excessive nutrient inputs – they can multiply rapidly, creating the harmful blooms.

BCEH recommend that people enjoying the outdoors this summer at lakes, rivers or streams practice healthy water habits:

- Heed instructions on posted advisories if present
- Avoid algae and scum in the water and on the shore
- Keep an eye on children and pets (dogs)
- If you think a HAB is present, do not let pets and other animals go into or drink the water, or eat scum/algal accumulations 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 HAB is present

Get medical treatment immediately if you think that you or your pets has gotten sick after going in the water. Be sure to alert the medical professional to the possible contact with cyanobacteria.

More information about human health impacts can be found on the [California Harmful Algal Blooms Portal](https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/) (<https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/>)

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