



Health Department

RALPH CLEGG
Executive Director
ERIC EDWARDS
Deputy Director

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CONTACT

Aislynn Tolman-Hill
Public Information Officer
Phone/Mobile: 833-824-3746
833-UCHDPIO

Utah Lake Algal Bloom Monitoring Resumes Recreators Encouraged to Follow Guidance on Signs

(Utah County, UT) – Monitoring for harmful algal blooms (HABs) resumed this week on Utah Lake after the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) received a one-time grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct monitoring of 18 priority waterbodies for harmful algal blooms (HABs).

Due to state budget uncertainty, DEQ’s program funding was cut and monitoring was put on hold. With this new funding from the federal government, sampling and updates for harmful algal blooms resumed this week. Updated sampling and advisory information will be available at habs.utah.gov.

UCHD encourages Utah Lake recreators to heed the Permanent Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) education/awareness signs around Utah Lake at common access points. Signs can have the additional “WARNING” or “DANGER” signs added below the main sign, as determined by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality’s Division of Water Quality’s sampling results.

“We are pleased with the improved process last year,” notes Ralph Clegg, Utah County Health Department Executive Director. “We encourage recreators to pay attention to signs so they know what HABs look like and what to avoid.”

Due to sample results received this week, showing high levels of toxins in the open water between the American Fork and Lindon Marinas, WARNING signs are being posted at both marinas.

Harmful algal blooms occur when stagnant, nutrient-rich water warms up in the summer and becomes the ideal breeding ground for cyanobacteria — commonly known as blue-green algae. Under these circumstances, the bacteria can reproduce quickly, overwhelm the waterbody and in some cases produce skin, liver and nervous system toxins.

“For those who would like updates on Utah Lake, such as when warnings or closures are issued or lifted, we encourage signing up at www.alerts.utahcounty.gov. It is an easy way to get text, e-mail, or phone notifications,” notes Utah County Health Department Public Information Officer, Aislynn Tolman-Hill.

For more information on harmful algal blooms in Utah go to: habs.utah.gov

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