



# Chelan-Douglas Health District

200 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, WA 98802

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Toxic Algae Blooms

**East Wenatchee, WA** – With warmer temperatures on the rise in our area, Chelan-Douglas Health District would like to remind the public of the risk of cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) that grows in lakes, ponds, and streams, given the appropriate environment.

The ideal condition for blue-green algae blooms is in warm, still, or slow-moving shallow water. These blooms look like spilled green paint, thick pea soup, or colored greenish scum on the surface of the water; it may also have a foul smell. This bloom grows and spreads quickly and produces toxins that can be dangerous to humans and deadly for pets and other animals.

Symptoms of exposure to humans:

- Skin Contact: Rashes, hives, or skin blisters
- Inhalation: Coughing, wheezing, or shortness of breath
- Ingestion: Stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, or fever.

This could lead to liver or neurological damage.

Pet owners should seek immediate veterinary care if their pet exhibits any of the following symptoms after playing or coming in contact with water:

- excessive drooling, vomiting, or diarrhea
- weakness, muscle tremors or seizures
- difficult breathing or disorientation

This could lead to sudden death.

When in doubt, stay out! Many people might confuse cyanobacteria with duckweed, green algae, or tree pollen. It is important to be mindful of secluded bays, beaches, or shorelines where water is stagnant. Cyanobacteria starts appearing in mid-to-late summer where bodies of still water get a lot of sunshine.

If you have concerns or would like to report a potential harmful algal bloom, please contact your local health district. Chelan-Douglas Health District will complete water testing into areas of concern, as it is a complaint-driven program. You can also visit [www.nwtoxicalgae.org](http://www.nwtoxicalgae.org) to find lakes with algal blooms or to report a bloom.

Phone: (509) 886-6400 | Fax: (509) 886-6478 | [www.cdhd.wa.gov](http://www.cdhd.wa.gov)

*Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Community*

