

# Instructions for Harmful Algal Toxins above acute toxicity values Public Notice

## Template on Reverse

When your water system exceeds the acute toxicity values for a cyanotoxin, we recommend you provide public notice to persons served as soon as practical. Issue repeat notices every two weeks for as long as the advisory level is exceeded.

Community systems must use one or more of the following methods:

- Hand or direct delivery
- Mail, as a separate notice or included with the bill if timely
- Media (radio, television, newspaper)

Non-community systems must use one of the following methods:

- Posting in conspicuous locations
- Hand delivery
- Mail

In addition, both community and non-community systems must use another method reasonably calculated to reach others if they would not be reached by the first method. This can include newspapers, e-mail, or delivery to community organizations. If you decide to mail, post, or hand deliver, print your notice on letterhead, if available.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or mail. If you are posting the notice, you may wish to modify the words but you must include all health effects language.

## Corrective Action

Your notice should describe the corrective actions you are taking. Do not use overly technical terminology when describing treatment methods. Some steps commonly taken by water systems affected by harmful algal blooms and associated toxins are listed below. You may use one or more of the following actions, if appropriate, or develop your own:

- We are working with [local/state agency] to evaluate the water supply and are researching options to correct the problem. These options may include treating the water to remove the toxin or connecting to [system]'s water supply.
- We have stopped using the contaminated well/intake. We have increased pumping from other wells/intakes, and are considering drilling a new well.
- We have increased the frequency of water testing for algae toxins.
- We have since taken samples at [this location] and had them tested. They show that [results].

## Repeat Notices

If this is an ongoing situation and/or you fluctuate above and below the advisory level, you should give the history behind the situation including the contamination source, if known. List the date of the initial detection, as well as how levels have changed over time. If levels change as a result of treatment, you can include this information.

## After Issuing the Notice

Send a copy of each type of notice and a certification that you have met all public notification recommendations within ten days after issuing the notice to your primacy agency.

# DO NOT DRINK WATER ADVISORY

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### [System] Has Levels of Algae toxin Above Drinking Water acute toxicity values

(Water System Name) routinely monitors for the presence of contaminants in our finished drinking water that is provided through our treatment and distribution system. Our water system recently exceeded the Oregon Health Authority's acute toxicity value for a cyanotoxin [toxin detected, date sampled and value detected] which is a by-product of certain algae species that naturally grow in water. Although this is not currently a regulated contaminant, as our customers, you have a right to know this acute toxicity value was exceeded, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

#### What should I do?

- **Drinking water above the acute toxicity value of [x] ug/L of [toxin] is not advised. You may want to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply.** If you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

#### What does this mean?

Human health effects from cyanotoxins are diverse and may include skin rashes and lesions, vomiting, gastroenteritis, conjunctivitis, headaches, eye, ear and throat irritations, abdominal cramps, nausea, diarrhea, fever, sore throat or hay fever-like symptoms. [Long-term exposure to microcystin can lead to damage to the liver, including cancer].

#### What is being done?

[Water system name] continues to work with [Insert Water Body Manager] to monitor and test the algal bloom for harmful toxins. In addition [water system name] is adjusting their treatment process to more successfully mitigate for the presence of cyanotoxins. Weekly testing will continue until toxin levels are below the acute toxicity values.

For more information, please contact [name of contact] at [phone number] or [mailing address].

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by [system]. State Water System ID#: \_\_\_\_\_. Date distributed: \_\_\_\_\_