

News release

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Health advisory lifted for Willow Creek Reservoir *Reduced blue-green algae levels confirmed*

A health advisory for Willow Creek Reservoir, located just east of the town of Heppner in Morrow County, was lifted today by the Oregon Health Authority. The advisory was issued June 18 because of high levels of blue-green algae in the lake.

Water monitoring has confirmed the blue-green algae cells present in the lake are below health advisory guideline values for the cyanotoxins they can produce. Although a bloom is still present, the species of blue-green algae in the bloom does not produce toxins.

Oregon health officials advise people who use Oregon water bodies for recreation to always be alert to signs of algae blooms. People and their pets should avoid contact if the water is foamy, scummy, thick like paint, pea-green, blue-green or brownish red in color, or if a mat of algae is visible in the water.

For local information, contact U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Willow Creek Natural Resource Management office at 541-676-9009. For health information, contact the Harmful Algae Bloom Surveillance (HABS) program at 971-673-0400.

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The HABS program maintains a current list of all health advisories on its website. To find out if an advisory has been issued or lifted for a specific water body, visit www.healthoregon.org/hab and select “Check current water conditions.” You can also contact the Oregon Public Health Division toll-free information line at 1-877-290-6767.

The Harmful Algae Bloom Surveillance program is funded through September 2013 by a grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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