



## Blue-Green Algae Information

### What is it?

- Primitive photosynthetic bacteria
- Known formally as Cyanobacteria
- Nitrogen fixing
- Blooms occur in nutrient rich waterbodies
- Occurs most prevalently in late summer

### Appearance of Blooms

- Lake water will appear like green paint with thick consistency
- Floating mats of blue-green biomatter
- Concentrates on wind-swept sides of lakes

### Health Concerns

- Rashes can occur with skin contact
- Ingesting water under bloom conditions can lead to stomach and liver distress
- Animals occasionally die from ingesting large quantities of water with a bloom present
- Symptoms of possible over-exposure
  - Vomiting and diarrhea
  - Weakness and staggering
  - Convulsions
  - Difficulty breathing

### Precautions

- If under bloom conditions
  - Avoid physical contact with water
  - Prevent children or pets from accessing the water
  - Avoid accidental ingestion
  - If skin contact does occur attempt to wash with tap water
  - If accidental ingestion occurs contact nearest hospital or veterinarian

### Prevention

- Avoid over fertilizing your properties
  - Test your soils for nutrient levels
- Pick up animal waste from your pets
- Maintain septic systems
- Farmers and ranchers can contact their local Conservation District, Watershed Coordinator, or NRCS office if they have resource concerns



### Do you have questions or concerns?

#### Contact:

South Dakota Department of Environment  
and Natural Resources (Pierre Office)

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