

Eastern Highlands Health District Blue-Green Algae Bloom Response Protocol Coventry Lake

Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee
Annual Meeting
September 20, 2023

ROBERT MILLER, MPH, RS

DIRECTOR OF HEALTH



Presentation Outline

- Purpose of the protocol
- Protocol Highlights
 - Measures utilized
 - Response Categories (1,2,3)
 - Terminating Health Advisory
 - Examples - Public Health Messaging



Protocol Purpose

To establish a coordinated framework for reporting, monitoring, and issuing public health risk messaging related to Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in the Coventry Lake community. It aims to protect public health, enhance communication and coordination among stakeholders, and provide clear guidance on actions to be taken in response to HAB concerns. This protocol helps to ensure a effective response to mitigate the impact of HABs on Coventry Lake and the well-being of those that use the lake.



Measures Utilized

- Visual field observations (Visual Rankings)
- Secchi disk observations
- Cyanobacteria cell counts
- Other measures used in consultation with town consultant

Response Categories

- Category 1
 - Water generally clear (visual rank 1), secchi disk >2.5m
- Category 2
 - Some visible accumulations and/or cloudy water column (visual rank 2), and/or;
 - secchi disk 1m - 2.5m, and/or;
 - cell count 20K/ml to 100K/ml
- Category 3
 - Water is discolored throughout, large areas affected (visual rank 3), and/or:
 - secchi disk <1m, and/or;
 - cell count >100K/ml



Response Categories – Communications & Messaging

- Category 1
 - No special messaging or notices needed

- Category 2
 - EHHD issues Public Health *NOTICE*
 - Notify Town, CT DEEP, CT DPH
 - Notice posted to websites, social media, email list serve distribution

- Category 3
 - EHHD issues *PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY*
 - Notify Town, CT DEEP, CT DPH
 - Town beaches closed
 - All public access points posted
 - Advisory posted to websites, social media, email list serve



Response Protocol Table

Observations	Notifications	Further monitoring	Public Notices
Visual Rank Category 1 Conditions normal, secchi disk >2.5m	Not needed	No change	Not needed
Visual Rank Category 2, secchi disk 1m and 2.5m, and/or blue-green algae cells 20k/ml and 100k/ml	Notify CT DPH, CT DEEP, Town, as needed	Consider increase in testing frequency and regular visual surveillance until conditions change	EHHD may issue Category 2 Notice to stakeholders.
Visual Rank Category 3, secchi disk <1m and/or blue-green algae cells > 100k/ml (Other data may be used in consultation with town consultant.)	Update/inform CT DPH & CT DEEP and expand risk communication efforts.	Collect weekly (or as needed) samples for analysis and increase frequency and locations of field observations	EHHD or DEEP to issue public advisory statement POSTED BEACH CLOSURE: alert water users that a blue-green algae bloom is present. POSTED ADVISORY: At other impacted public access points. TOWN to send email blast, social media, and publish advisory statement.

Terminating Health Advisory

- Cell count drops $<70\text{K/ml}$ for two consecutive weekly sampling rounds
- Supported by visual observation ranking
- Other measures in consultation with town consultant



Category 2 - Messaging

NOTICE

The Coventry Lake Water Monitoring Program has identified a potential increased risk of a harmful algae bloom

Be alert and avoid skin contact with water that:

- Looks like spilled paint
- Has surface scums, mats or films
- Is discolored or has colored streaks
- Has green globs floating below the surface

*Keep children and pets away from water that has the above characteristics and **rinse off any exposed skin or fur with clean water.***

For more information contact:



Eastern Highlands Health
District
860 429 3325
www.EHHD.org



Category 3 Messaging

HEALTH ADVISORY

Coventry Lake is experiencing a Blue-green algae bloom

Local officials received water quality test results from of the town limnologist confirming the presence of a blue-green algae at levels that pose a health risk to people and pets that come into contact with the water in Coventry Lake.

Avoid contacting water that has a noxious odor, appears green throughout (sometimes referred to as looking like pea soup), or that has mats, films or scums accumulating on the surface.

Direct exposure to algae tainted water by way of ingestion, inhalation, or contact with skin may pose a risk to health.

Please no swimming, and keep your pets out of the algae tainted water. Please avoid skin contact with the water when boating and fishing.

Regular monitoring of lake conditions will occur moving forward until bloom dissipates. The community will be notified of the bloom dissipation at that time.

If you have any questions, please call the Eastern Highlands Health District at 860-429-3325.

Additional information on algae blooms can be found by scanning this QR Code:



DATE:



EHHD
Eastern Highlands Health District

QUESTIONS?

Robert Miller, MPH, RS

Director of Health

Eastern Highlands Health District

millerrl@ehhd.org

860-429-3325

Twitter: @RobMillerMPH

