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**Health advisory issued for Walterville Pond**  
*High algae levels found at Walterville Pond in Lane County*

A health advisory was issued today due to high levels of blue-green algae in Walterville Pond, located five miles east of Springfield off Hwy. 126, approximately a half mile from the town of Walterville. Water monitoring has confirmed the presence of blue-green algae that can produce toxins. These algae levels are likely to be associated with dangerous cyanotoxin concentrations in the water that can be harmful to humans and animals. Swallowing or inhaling water droplets should be avoided, as well as skin contact with water.

Drinking water from Walterville Pond is especially dangerous. Oregon Public Health officials advise campers and other Walterville Pond visitors that toxins cannot be removed by boiling, filtering or treating the water with camping-style filters.

People who draw in-home water directly from Walterville Pond are advised to use an alternative water source because private treatment systems are not proven effective in removing algae toxins. However, public drinking water systems can reduce algae toxins through proper filtration and disinfection. If people on public water systems have questions about treatment and testing, they should contact their water supplier.

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Oregon health officials recommend that people who choose to eat fish from waters where algae blooms are present should remove all fat, skin and organs before cooking since toxins are more likely to collect in these tissues. Public health officials also advise that people should not eat freshwater clams from Walterville Pond. Crayfish muscle can be eaten, but internal organs and liquid fat should be discarded.

Exposure to toxins can produce symptoms of numbness, tingling and dizziness that can lead to difficulty breathing or heart problems, and require immediate medical attention. Symptoms of skin irritation, weakness, diarrhea, nausea, cramps and fainting also should receive medical attention if they persist or worsen. Children and pets are particularly susceptible.

The public will be advised when the concern no longer exists.

With proper precautions to avoid water contact, people are encouraged to visit Walterville Pond and enjoy activities such as camping, hiking, biking, picnicking, fishing and bird watching. Boating is safe as long as speeds do not create excessive water spray, which could lead to inhalation risk.

For local information contact the Eugene Water and Electric Board at 541-685-7471 or 541-341-8500, ext. 2.

For health information, contact the Harmful Algae Bloom Surveillance (HABS) program at 971-673-0400 or [www.healthoregon.org/hab](http://www.healthoregon.org/hab); also contact the Oregon Public Health Division toll-free information line at 1-877-290-6767 or Lane County Environmental Health at 541-682-4051.

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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](http://www.healthoregon.org/hab) and select "Check current water conditions."

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

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