

Animal Safety Alert

CYANOBACTERIA BLOOMS

When in doubt, it's best to keep out!



What is a cyanobacteria bloom?

Cyanobacteria, sometimes called blue-green algae, are microscopic organisms found naturally in all types of water.

- Cyanobacteria grow quickly, or bloom, when the water is warm, stagnant, and full of nutrients.
- Cyanobacteria blooms usually occur during the summer and fall. However, they can occur anytime during the year.
- When a bloom occurs, scum might float on the water's surface.
- Blooms come in different colors, from green or blue to red or brown.
- As the bloom dies off, you may smell an odor like rotting plants.

What is a toxic bloom?

Sometimes, cyanobacteria produce toxins.

- The toxins can be present in the cyanobacteria cells or in the water.
- Swallowing water with cyanobacteria that are producing toxins can cause serious illness.

You cannot tell if a bloom is toxic just by looking at it

Animal Safety Alert

Health and safety tips for pets and livestock

1. Do not let your pets or livestock graze near, drink, or swim in water where you see cyanobacteria blooms, foam, or scum on the surface.
2. If your animal gets in water with a bloom, immediately wash it off with clean water. Do not let the animal lick cyanobacteria off of its fur.
3. Call a veterinarian if your animal shows any of these symptoms of cyanobacteria poisoning: loss of energy, loss of appetite, vomiting, stumbling and falling, foaming at the mouth, diarrhea, convulsions, excessive drooling, tremors and seizures, or any unexplained sickness that occurs within a day or so after being in contact with water.

You can help protect your pets and livestock from cyanobacteria blooms by taking the following actions:

- Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/habs/general.html> to learn more about cyanobacteria.
- Know what a bloom looks like and avoid contact.
- Keep pets and livestock away from the water if you see signs of cyanobacteria.
- Call your veterinarian if your animals are sick.
- Call your state or local health department to report pets or livestock made sick by cyanobacteria.

To report a cyanobacteria bloom or related health event:

- Call your local or state health department

For more information:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/habs/general.html>

