



# Panhandle Health District

*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Panhandle Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Health Advisory Issued for Hayden Lake



**KOOTENAI CO., ID** -- A health advisory was issued today for Hayden Lake by the Panhandle Health District (PHD) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Water samples confirmed the presence of the blue-green algae *Anabaena sp.* This species can produce potentially dangerous toxins. This algal bloom was identified in the northern end of the lake.

Public health officials are asking people to evaluate the water conditions before recreating in or near the lake. In areas where water is an uncharacteristic green color or areas with thick, green mats along shorelines, take extra precaution. Avoid inhaling, swallowing or direct contact with water containing algae. Drinking water from the lake may be dangerous if toxins are present and they cannot be removed by boiling or filtering the water. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, symptoms of exposure are not documented in humans; however, in animals, a toxin produced by *Anabaena sp.* can

cause a rapid progression of neurological symptoms such as muscle spasm, decreased movement, labored breathing, convulsions, and death.

The algae is only affecting the northern end of the lake. Honeysuckle Beach is not currently affected by this bloom. People are encouraged to enjoy other activities near the lake including camping, hiking, biking, catch and release fishing and bird watching. If people choose to eat fish from this area, it is recommended that you remove all fat, skin and organs before cooking since toxins are more likely to collect in those tissues.

At this time, Fernan Lake and Avondale Lake also have active health advisories related to blue-green algae. There are many species that naturally occur in Idaho surface waters and only some species release toxins under certain conditions. *Anabena sp.* blooms occur in water conditions of optimal temperature, oxygen, and when nitrogen is unavailable and phosphorus is abundant. The public will be advised when the concern no longer exists.

**For environmental questions contact Idaho Department of Environmental Quality: (208) 769-1422.**

**For health-related questions contact Panhandle Health District: Erik Ketner (208) 415-5224.**

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