



# September 2017 Lake Louisa

Blue Green Algae  
(CYANOBACTERIA)



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Goal :

- Acquire knowledge to prevent the proliferation of blue green algae
- Sensitize residents to the problems related to cyanobacteria

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## What is a cyanobacteria bloom?

- Blue green algae are microorganisms that are related to the aquatic phytoplankton community. They are classified in the same group of bacteria that are more primitive than other types of algae.




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- We find cyanobacteria in all waterways. They are some of the oldest microorganisms on the planet. They have been around for over 3.5 billion years. In and of themselves, they present no danger to us, unless conditions create a proliferation of blooms that we call blue green algae.







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- Under favourable conditions that would include elevated concentrations of phosphorus, light and heat, cyanobacteria can reproduce rapidly and abundantly and create blooms



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- Cyanobacteria result when water is polluted by nutrients that increase phosphorus levels and usually occurs in the late summer or early fall
  - An abundance of phosphorus is the main culprit in the development of blue green algae
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## How to recognize a blue green algae bloom

Blooms are often green or turquoise and resemble:


- Pea soup and can contain small green particles that look like thin grass
  - Green paint floating on the lake
  - Green foam on the shoreline that can be viscous
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## Are all algae blooms toxic?

- No. Not all blooms are blue green algae and other blooms are mainly non toxic. Once blue green algae has bloomed, the probability that it will become toxic is elevated.



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- **IMPACTS**

- Disrupts the equilibrium of our lake
- Deteriorates the appearance of our lake
- Can disrupt recreational activities
- Reduces property values
- -Risk to public health






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## Swimming and water activities


- Swimming is only safe in areas where there are no blue green algae blooms
- You must remain at least 3 metres from the bloom
- You may resume swimming at least 24 hours after the bloom disappears



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## What you can do:

- Ensure your shoreline has adequate vegetation
- Avoid herbicides and eliminate any use of fertilizers
- Ensure your septic system is in good working order
- Use phosphate-free soaps and detergents
- Practice safe and responsible aquatic activities



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## What should I do if I suspect there is blue green algae?

- Contact a regional representative of the environment minister ( ie. the Wentworth or the Wentworth north municipal office)
- At anytime : Complete the [constat visuel](#) form and fax or email to the regional representative;
- During office hours : Call the [direction régionale du Ministère](#) and ask for the person responsible for the cyanobacteria file;
- Outside office hours: Contact Urgence-Environnement at 1 866 694-5454.
- You may also consult the Public Health [recommandations générales](#) of the MSSS that lists recommended precautions.



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**Thank you!**

