



Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

Barry County: 330 W. Woodlawn Ave., Hastings MI 49058
Phone: 269-945-9516 Fax: 269-818-0237

Eaton County: 1033 Health Care Dr., Charlotte, MI 48813
Phone: 517-543-2430 Fax: 517-543-7737

Eaton Behavioral Health: 1033 Health Care Dr., Charlotte, MI
48813
Phone: 517-543-2580 Fax: 517-543-8191

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BEDHD Updates Public Health Advisory for Historic Charlton Park Beach

The Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD), with guidance from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), today (July 14) has updated the public health advisory for the Thornapple Lake swimming beach at Historic Charlton Park.

BEDHD yesterday issued a public health advisory due to the possible presence at the beach of a harmful algal bloom (HAB), which can cause illness in humans and animals. **Based on water sample results received today, July 14, from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the amount of toxin at the beach was not at a level that would present a threat to human health.**

On July 11, the MDEQ got a referral about suspicious-looking algae scum at Historic Charlton Park's beach. MDEQ collected water samples to test for a harmful toxin that often causes HABs. The early sample results received by BEDHD on July 12, showed that this toxin was probably present at the swimming beach. However, the exact levels of the toxin were unknown. Because of that, BEDHD did not know if there was a threat to humans or pets. Out of caution and to protect the health of the public, BEDHD issued a public health advisory for the swimming beach and recommended that people and pets not enter the water, especially where blue-green algae is visible.

Follow-up tests results received today (July 14) by BEDHD show that the level of toxin present at the swimming beach is below the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) draft recreational criteria.

BEDHD strongly suggests that lake users still follow these recommendations:

- Avoid water that looks like spilled paint, has surface scums or films, is discolored or has colored streaks, and/or has green globs floating below the surface.
- Keep pets out of water with the above characteristics. If they come into contact with this water, rinse them off immediately. Do not let them drink the water or lick algae off their coats.
- Avoid swallowing water.
- Rinse off with clean water after swimming.

The public should also know that the amount of blue-green algae present in the lake could change quickly. A potential HAB could occur at any time. Awareness signs have been posted at various public access points to Thornapple Lake. While not all algal blooms produce toxins, to be safe, people and animals should avoid contact with very thick green scums in surface waters.

If you have concerns about algae in surface waters, contact MDEQ at AlgaeBloom@michigan.gov. For more information about HABs, see MDEQ's information at <https://goo.gl/Ar6HSG>. For information about how HABs can affect health, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/habs/>.