



**Date:** August 22, 2008

**General questions:** Patrick O'Neill, DHS, 971-673-1282

**Technical questions:** Ken Kauffman, DHS, 971-673-0435

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### **Public health advisory issued for Dorena Reservoir**

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A health advisory prompted by high algae levels found in Dorena Reservoir, located in Lane County, was issued today by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Lane County Health Department and the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS).

Water sampling by the Corps of Engineers confirmed the presence of high densities of blue-green algae that can produce toxins harmful to humans and animals, said Ken Kauffman, Environmental Health Specialist with the Oregon Public Health Division's Environmental Toxicology Program.

These levels are likely to be associated with dangerous toxin concentrations in the water, according to World Health Organization guidelines.

Swallowing or inhaling water droplets should be avoided, as well as skin contact with water by humans or animals. Drinking water from Dorena Reservoir is especially dangerous. The toxins cannot be removed by boiling, filtering, or treating water.

DHS recommends that people choosing to eat fish caught in the reservoir should remove all fat, skin and organs before cooking because toxins are more likely to collect in these tissues.

Symptoms of numbness, tingling and dizziness can lead to difficulty breathing or heart problems and require immediate medical attention. Symptoms of skin irritation, weakness, diarrhea, nausea, cramps and fainting, and should also 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 Dorena Reservoir and enjoy activities such as camping, hiking, biking, picnicking, catch-and-release fishing and bird watching.

For local information contact the Corps of Engineers, Cottage Grove Office, 541- 942-5631. For health information, contact Ken Kauffman, DHS Environmental Health Specialist, at 971-673-0435 or <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/envtox/maadvisories.shtml> or call Lane County Health Department at 541-682-4480.

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