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Public Health Advisory Lifted For Siltcoos Lake

The Oregon Department of Human Services, Environmental Toxicology Program, in cooperation with Lane County Health Department and Douglas County Health Department announced today the lifting of the public health advisory for Siltcoos Lake, located between the cities of Florence and Reedsport.

The advisory was issued on Sept. 18 in response to a harmful algae bloom in the lake and involving Siltcoos River downstream of the lake.

Water tests by aquatic biologists have confirmed significantly lower levels of blue-green algae that can produce toxins harmful to humans and animals, said Deanna Conners, toxicologist for the Oregon Department of Human Services.

Current algal densities are not likely to be associated with dangerous toxin concentrations for recreational activities in the water, according to World Health Organization guidelines. Recent toxin testing of samples from the most effected areas on the lake suggest that toxin levels are below the dangerous threshold for other household uses of water including showering and drinking water.

DHS advises people who draw water from the lake for household use to continue to filter and disinfect the water because these measures are necessary at all times to remove or destroy viruses, bacteria and other microbes. Private water users should also be alert to any evidence of future algae blooms, and avoid ingesting water during such times. Water treatment systems cannot always removal all algal toxins and harmful algae blooms below the recreational advisory threshold can pose serious hazards to persons who drink the water, cook with the water or inhale droplets and spray.

For local information citizens are advised to contact officials at Dunes City, 541-997-3338. Citizens who are supplied with water by the South Coast Water District are encouraged to contact the supplier if they have questions about their water quality 541-997-8011.

The above information can also be found at
<http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/envtox/maadvisories.shtml>

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