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Public Health Warning Issued for Kansas Lakes Due to Blue-Green Algae

Hodgeman Co. SFL and Lake Wabaunsee changed from watch to warning status

TOPEKA – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP), has issued public health warnings for some Kansas lakes for the upcoming weekend and week.

If a lake is under a public health warning for blue-green algae, activities such as boating and fishing may be safe. However, direct contact with water (i.e., wading, skiing and swimming) is strongly discouraged for people, pets and livestock. The lakes currently under a public health advisory:

- **Warning:** Atchison Co. Park Lake, Atchison County
- **Warning:** Atwood Township Lake, Rawlins County
- **Warning:** Carbondale West Lake, Osage County
- **Warning:** Central Park Lake (Pond), Shawnee County
- **Warning:** Frazier Lake, Grant County
- **Warning:** Hodgeman County SFL, Hodgeman County
- **Warning:** Lake Afton, Sedgwick County
- **Warning:** Lake Wabaunsee, Wabaunsee County
- **Warning:** Lakewood Park Lake, Saline County
- **Warning:** Marais Des Cygnes Wildlife Area, Linn County
- **Warning:** Melvern Outlet Pond, Osage County
- **Warning:** Melvern Outlet Swim Pond, Osage County *Beach Closure – Visitors can utilize Eisenhower State Park Swim Beach.*
- **Warning:** Overbrook City Lake, Osage County
- **Warning:** Rock Garden Pond, Gage Park, Shawnee County
- **Warning:** South Lake Park, Johnson County

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- **Warning:** Webster Lake, Rooks County – *Beach is closed. Webster State Park remains open. Drinking water and bath house facilities are not affected by the algae bloom.*
- **Watch:** Council Grove City Lake, Morris County
- **Watch:** Lake Scott State Park, Scott County
- **Watch:** Mary's Lake, Douglas County
- **Watch:** Melvern Lake, Osage County *Beach Closure – Visitors can utilize Eisenhower State Park Swim Beach.*
- **Watch:** Pomona Lake, Osage County
- **Watch:** Tomahawk Parkway North Pond, Johnson County

The watch on Cottonwood River, south of Emporia in Lyon County has been lifted.

A closed or closure status indicates that conditions are extremely dangerous for humans and pets. Harmful algal toxins and cell counts are at dangerously high levels. Any kind of contact with the waterbody is prohibited.

Lakes under a warning are not closed. Marinas, lakeside businesses and park camping facilities are open for business. If swim beaches are closed, it will be specifically noted. Drinking water and showers at parks are safe and not affected by algae blooms. Boating and fishing are safe on lakes under a warning but contact with the water should be avoided. Hands should also be washed with clean water after handling fish taken from an affected lake. Zoned lakes may have portions fully open for all recreation even if other portions are under a warning.

Kansans should be aware that blooms are unpredictable. They can develop rapidly and may float around the lake, requiring visitors to exercise their best judgment. If there is scum, a paint-like surface or the water is bright green, avoid contact and keep pets away. These are indications that a harmful bloom may be present. Pet owners should be aware that animals that swim in or drink water affected by a harmful algal bloom or eat dried algae along the shore may become seriously ill or die.

When a warning is issued, KDHE recommends the following precautions be taken:

- Lake water is not safe to drink for pets or livestock.
- Lake water, regardless of blue-green algae status, should never be consumed by humans.
- Water contact should be avoided.
- Fish may be eaten if they are rinsed with clean water and only the fillet portion is consumed, while all other parts are discarded.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae.
- If lake water contacts skin, wash with clean water as soon as possible.
- Avoid areas of visible algae accumulation.

KDHE samples publicly-accessible bodies of water for blue-green algae when the agency receives reports of potential algae blooms in Kansas lakes. Based on sampling results, KDHE reports on potentially harmful conditions.

For information on blue-green algae and reporting potential harmful algal blooms, please visit www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/index.htm.

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