

DEQ Regional Offices

DEQ Boise Regional Office

1445 N. Orchard St.
Boise, ID 83706
ph: (208) 373-0550
toll-free: (888) 800-3480

DEQ Coeur d'Alene Regional Office

2110 Ironwood Parkway
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
ph: (208) 769-1422
toll-free: (877) 370-0017

DEQ Idaho Falls Regional Office

900 N. Skyline Drive, Suite B
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
ph: (208) 528-2650
toll-free: (800) 232-4635

DEQ Lewiston Regional Office

1118 "F" St.
Lewiston, ID 83501
ph: (208) 799-4370
toll-free: (877) 541-3304

DEQ Pocatello Regional Office

444 Hospital Way, #300
Pocatello, ID 83201
ph: (208) 236-6160
toll-free: (888) 655-6160

DEQ Twin Falls Regional Office

650 Addison Ave. West, Suite 110
Twin Falls, ID 83301
ph: (208) 736-2190
toll-free: (800) 270-1663

Poison Center

1-800-222-1222

Public Health Districts

Panhandle Health District

208-415-5100
www.phd1.idaho.gov
(serving Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone counties)

Public Health - Idaho North Central District

208-799-3100
www.idahopublichealth.com
(serving Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce counties)

Southwest District Health

208-455-5400
www.swdh.org
(serving Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, and Washington counties)

Central District Health Department

208-375-5211
www.cdhd.idaho.gov
(serving Ada, Boise, Elmore and Valley counties)

South Central Public Health District

208-737-5900; (866) 710-9775
www.phd5.idaho.gov
(serving Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls counties)

Southeastern Idaho Public Health

208-233-9080
www.siphidaho.org
(serving Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power counties)

Eastern Idaho Public Health District

208-522-0310
<https://phd7.idaho.gov>
(serving Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton counties)

Harmful Algal Blooms



Photo provided by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

What is a harmful algal bloom (HAB)?

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) are not composed of algae at all, but a type of bacteria. When conditions are favorable (such as calm weather conditions, and an increase in water temperature and nutrients) these bacteria can reproduce rapidly, forming a bloom. HABs can occur at any time, but often occur in late summer or early fall.

What does a HAB look like?

HABs can be blue, bright green, brown, or red and may look like paint or anti-freeze floating on the water. As the bloom matures, it may look like foam, scum, or mats on the surface and shoreline of freshwater lakes and ponds.



How are people and animals exposed to HABs?

People and animals can be exposed to HABs by swallowing water or touching the water during recreational activities, such as wading, swimming, diving, and water skiing.

What are the health effects of HABs?

In people, the most common health effect is skin and eye irritation. Other more severe health effects can be:

- Allergic reactions
- Muscle cramps or tremor
- Difficulty breathing
- Stomach pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache or drowsiness
- Numbness and tingling in lips, fingers, and toes
- Speech not understandable
- Seizures
- Liver and kidney damage

If you have contact with a HAB and you or a companion have symptoms, consult a medical provider immediately!

Pets and livestock exposed to a HAB may show signs such as:

- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Weakness or muscle tremors
- Staggering or confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Convulsions or coma
- Death

Animals exposed to a HAB may die within tens of minutes to hours.

If your pet comes into contact with a HAB, call a veterinarian right away.

Decomposing HABs can also kill fish.

How can I prevent exposure to HABs?

- Do not go in or near any water that has an unusual color. Keep children, pets, and livestock out of the water.
- Avoid any water sports such as swimming, diving, water skiing, boating, or paddle boarding in areas with HABs.
- Do not use untreated water for drinking, bathing, cleaning, or cooking. Boiling water from a HAB will **NOT** remove toxins — boiling may cause more toxin to be released.

Can I fish in a lake with a HAB present?

HAB toxins accumulate in the organs and fatty tissue of fish living where a bloom is occurring. When you consume fish from a lake with a bloom, take these steps:

- Remove the skin, organs, and fatty deposits from the fish
- Rinse the remaining parts with clean water before cooking
- Cook the fish thoroughly
- Limit the amount you eat to two 8-oz fish fillets or fish steaks a week or less

To report a HAB call your local Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) office. For concerns about health effects from HABs please call your local Public Health District (numbers on back).