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Blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) bloom advisory issued for Islet Lake

EDMONTON ZONE – A blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) bloom has been identified in areas of Islet Lake, located within the Edmonton Zone of Alberta Health Services. Residents living near the shores of this lake, as well as visitors to this lake, are advised to take the following precautions:

- **Avoid all contact** with blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) blooms. If contact occurs, wash with tap water as soon as possible.
- **Do not swim or wade** (or allow your pets to swim or wade) in any areas where blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) is visible.
- **Do not** feed whole fish or fish trimmings from this lake to your pets.
- Consider limiting human consumption of whole fish and fish trimmings from this lake, as it is known that fish may store toxins in their liver. (People can safely consume fish fillets from this lake).

As always, visitors and residents are reminded to never drink or cook with untreated water directly from any recreational body of water, including Islet Lake, at any time. Boiling of this water will not remove the toxins produced by blue-green algae. An alternate source of drinking water should also be provided for pets and livestock while this advisory is active.

Blue-green algae is naturally occurring and often becomes visible when weather conditions are calm. Appearing like scum, grass clippings, fuzz or globs on the surface of water, blue-green algae can be blue-green, greenish-brown, brown, and/or pinkish-red, and often smells musty or grassy.

People who come in contact with visible blue-green algae or who ingest water containing blue-green algae may experience skin irritation, rash, sore throat, sore red eyes, swollen lips, fever, nausea and vomiting and/or diarrhea. Symptoms usually appear within one to three hours and resolve in one to two days. Symptoms in children are often more pronounced; however, all humans are at risk of these symptoms.

Weather and wind conditions can cause algae blooms to move from one location in the lake to another. Due to this, the advisory will remain in effect for Islet Lake until further notice.

Please note that areas of Islet Lake in which the blue-green algae bloom is NOT visible can still be used for recreational purposes, even while this blue-green algae Health Advisory is in place.

If you suspect a problem related to blue-green algae, or if you require further information on health concerns and blue-green algae, please call Health Link at 811. Additional information is also available online, at www.ahs.ca/bga.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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