

Media Release

10 January 2024

Blue-green algae warning for Lake Nillahcootie

Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is warning people to avoid direct contact with water in Lake Nillahcootie after monitoring detected high levels of blue-green algae.

Warning signs will be positioned at formal recreational areas around the lake and will remain in place while high levels of blue-green algae are present.

Lake Nillahcootie will remain open to the public for any activities that do not involve direct contact with the water while the warning is in place.

GMW Water Quality coordinator Bianca Atley asked people to take care around the water.

“Blue-green algae occur naturally in waterbodies but contain toxins harmful to humans and animals,” she said.

“Contact with it can cause rashes; sore eyes, ears, and nose; or if swallowed can lead to gastroenteritis which can induce vomiting, diarrhoea, fevers and headaches. It is therefore important people boating or enjoying activities near the water take extra precautions.”

GMW recommends:

- People and pets avoid contact with the water.
- Those who come into contact with affected water should wash affected skin immediately in clean cold water.
- Seeking an alternative water supply for stock and pets where possible.
- Not using affected water for cooking, drinking, washing or showering. Boiling the affected water will not make it safe for these purposes.

It is not possible to predict how long the algae will remain at high levels.

People can stay up-to-date with blue-green algae warnings by ringing 1800 013 357 and selecting the option for blue-green algae information, or by visiting the GMW website: www.g-mwater.com.au/news/bga

Water supplied by GMW is not suitable for human consumption without first being properly treated.

Human consumption includes showering, bathing, washing, cooking, ice-making, and drinking.

For more information about blue-green algae and your health, visit the Department of Health’s website www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Harmful-algal-blooms, or phone NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 606 024.

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