

Lake Helen toxicity from algae still a concern

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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A type of toxin from blue-green algae, that can cause sickness in humans and death to animals that drink it, is still in the waters of Lake Helen.

City officials erected a sign at the lake entrance on July 8 to warn of the danger.

On Tuesday, city administrator Bruce Clymer said the warning could remain in effect for the rest of the summer.

“We’ll let people know once the danger has passed,” he said.

Clymer said the lake is safe for boating and fishing but said NDEQ officials suggest thorough hand washing if people have contact with the water.

A health alert was issued for the lake because the level of toxins in the water make it potentially unsafe for full-body recreational activities, such as swimming.

NDEQ officials said microcystin is the toxin being measured which is generated from certain strains of blue-green algae.

A number of lakes in Nebraska are on alert because of blue algae that can produce toxins under the right combinations of water temperature, low water depths and nutrients such as high nitrogen and phosphorous concentrations from wastewater discharges, officials said.

For more information, visit [website](#) .

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