

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Residents Advised of Blue Green Algae Bloom in Pigeon Lake

#### *Area Residents Who Use Water from Pigeon Lake Urged to Find Alternate Source of Water*

**Tuesday, November 16, 2010, Peterborough**

People who draw water from the northwestern section of Pigeon Lake, just below the dam by Little Bob Channel up to Port 32 in the Bobcaygeon area, are being advised to find an alternate source of water after blue-green algae was discovered in the lake.

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit is issuing the advisory after receiving a report from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) that a blue-green algae plume has been discovered in that part of Pigeon Lake. Samples collected by MOE inspectors confirm the plume is blue-green algae, or cyanobacteria as it is known by its scientific name. More testing is being done on the algae.

As an immediate precaution, the Health Unit is advising residents in the affected area to avoid using water from the lake and seek alternative sources of water for all purposes, including drinking, cooking, bathing, washing clothes and dishes, and providing water to pets. Dogs and other pets should also be kept from entering and swimming in the water. The advisory **does not** affect people who use municipal water systems, or those residents who draw water from drilled wells that are not affected by surface water.

The Health Unit's advisory is in effect until further notice.

Blue-green algae is a naturally-occurring phenomena in fresh water lakes that can produce toxins when it is dying or disturbed. This can put the health of people and animals at risk. Drinking water with the toxins may result in headaches, fever, diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting. Bathing or showering in water with blue-green algae can result in skin rashes, swollen lips, eye irritation and redness, ear ache and itchiness, sore throat, hay fever-like symptoms and asthma. Anyone who experiences these symptoms should seek immediate medical attention.

"Boiling the water will not fix the problem," adds Chris Eaton, Public Health Inspector with the Health Unit. "Boiling will kill the algae, but in doing so, releases more toxins into the water."

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NEWS RELEASE

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Residents in Galway Cavendish Harvey Township requiring further information should contact the Peterborough County-City Health Unit by calling (705) 743-1000. Residents in the City of Kawartha Lakes should contact the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit at (705) 324-3569.

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**For further information, please contact:**

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