

Communications Office
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Testing Confirms Blue-Green Algae In “Back Channel” Area of Pigeon Lake

Advisory to Avoid Water Usage Remains in Effect for Area Residents

Testing performed by the Ministry of the Environment has confirmed that the algae bloom in the “Back Channel” area of Pigeon Lake is blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria. The “Back Channel” area is on east side of Boyd Island in the northern part of Pigeon Lake.

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit would like to remind 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 lake water.

The advisory is in effect until further notice.

Blue-green algae are naturally-occurring phenomena in fresh water 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.

Residents who draw their household water from the Back Channel area of Pigeon Lake are advised that boiling the water will not solve this problem. Boiling will kill the algae, but in doing so, will release toxins into the water.

Residents in Galway-Cavendish and Harvey Township requiring more information can contact the Peterborough County-City Health Unit by calling (705) 743-1000.

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For media inquiries please contact:

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