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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, June 28, 2011

# **Health Unit Reports Lower Toxin Levels in “Back Channel” Area of Pigeon Lake and Big Bald Lake**

## ***Residents Still Advised to Use Caution if Blue-Green Algae Blooms Suspected***

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit has received test results from the Ministry of the Environment that show that toxin levels have fallen in the “Back Channel” area of Pigeon Lake and in Big Bald Lake where blue-green algae blooms were reported.

Toxin levels remain slightly elevated in the “Big Bob Channel” area of Pigeon Lake.

Toxin levels are within acceptable limits for drinking water in the “Back Channel” area of Pigeon Lake and Big Bald Lake. Residents that draw their water from a surface water supply are still advised not to use water in areas where they see a large, dense algae bloom.

Algae blooms can occur quickly and travel with water currents. It is best to be cautious. If residents suspect a blue green algae bloom, the Health Unit recommends they assume toxins are present, avoid using the water and call the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre at 1-800-266-6060.

Blue green algae blooms are natural phenomena that occur in fresh water lakes, bays and inlets. The algae thrive in areas where the water is shallow, slow moving and warm. One key factor affecting growth rates is the level of available nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. It is difficult to predict when and where a bloom will occur and for how long the toxin will be present as environmental conditions continually change.

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