

Health warning – algal bloom in Lake Pegasus

📅 Monday 30 December 2019 📄 [Media release](#) ⌚ 2 minutes to read

Public Health Alert

Health warning – algal bloom in Lake Pegasus

The Community and Public Health division of Canterbury DHB has issued a health warning after potentially toxic blue-green algae (planktonic cyanobacteria) were found in Lake Pegasus.

People and animals, particularly dogs, should avoid contact with Lake Pegasus until the health warning has been lifted.

Dr Cheryl Brunton, Canterbury Medical Officer of Health, says the algal bloom can produce toxins harmful to people and animals.

“Exposure may cause skin rashes, nausea, stomach cramps, tingling and numbness around the mouth and fingertips. If you experience any of these symptoms visit your doctor immediately and please let your doctor know if you have had contact with the lake water,” Dr Brunton says.

“No one should drink the water from the lake at any time. Boiling the water does not remove the toxin.”

Lake Pegasus is being monitored on a weekly basis and the public will be advised of any changes in water quality.

Facts about cyanobacteria:

The algae occur naturally but can increase rapidly during warmer months.

If the water is cloudy, discoloured, or has small globules suspended in it, avoid all contact.

Not all cyanobacterial blooms are visible to the human eye, and toxins can persist after the blooms disappear.

Cyanobacterial concentrations can change quickly with changing environmental conditions (e.g. wind).

If a health warning is in place avoid contact with the water.

For further information visit:

[Environment Canterbury – Swimming Water Quality.](#)

[CDHB – Recreational Water.](#)

Or contact Community and Public Health on (03) 364 1777.

For more information on Mahinga kai:

[Mahinga kai.](#)

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