

Health Advisory Issued for Hayden Lake

A health advisory was issued today for Hayden Lake by the Panhandle Health District and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. Water samples have confirmed the presence of the blue-green algae *Anabaena circinalis* in the northern end of the lake.

This algae species may produce potentially dangerous toxins. In animals, a toxin that may be produced by *Anabaena circinalis* can cause a rapid progression of neurological symptoms such as muscle spasm, decreased movement, labored breathing, convulsions and death.

Symptoms have not been documented in people. However, the public is advised to avoid any activity that could lead to ingesting the lake water considering the effect *Anabaena circinalis* has on animals.

Children and pets are particularly susceptible. This precaution is especially applicable to areas where water is an uncharacteristic green color and where unsightly thick green mats are present along shorelines. Drinking water from the lake may be dangerous if toxins are present; the toxins cannot be removed by boiling or filtering the water.

Blue-green algae are naturally occurring, microscopic bacteria. Many species occur in Idaho surface waters and only some species release toxins under certain conditions. *Anabena circinalis* blooms occur in water conditions of optimal temperature, oxygen, and when nitrogen is unavailable and phosphorus is abundant. These circumstances are most common during the warmer months of late summer.

The public will be advised when the concern no longer exists.