

What Can I Do?

Reduce Impermeable Surfaces

Impermeable surfaces do not allow water to soak into the ground. Instead, this water runs off the surface, carrying phosphorus into our waterbodies, along with salt, sediment, and chemicals like pesticides and herbicides. Areas of your property that are impermeable may include:

- Rooftops
- Driveways and parking lots
- Patios, walkways, and pavements
- Pools and sporting areas (i.e., tennis court)

Layered Landscapes

Lawns absorb less rainfall than natural areas that have multiple layers of vegetation like trees, shrubs, and herbaceous ground cover. Adding different layers of vegetation helps reduce runoff and filter pollutants.

Riparian Areas

Riparian areas are the transitional zones between water and upland habitat. These provide many functions that are essential to watershed health. They provide numerous benefits including trapping and storing water and sediment, filtering and buffering water and nutrients while increasing biodiversity. A mix of native herbaceous and woody vegetation cover like willows, shrubs and sedges is critical! Leave your riparian area intact to help clean the lake!

The more natural you keep your property, the healthier your lake will be.

Support our work by becoming an **Environmental Steward!**

- LICA membership is FREE for individuals
- Corporate and municipal memberships are also available!



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION!



Contact Us!

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References:
Government of Alberta (2023)
alberta.ca
Alberta Health Services (2023)
albertahealthservices.ca

What is Blue-Green Algae?





Toxic Algae Blooms

What is a Toxic Bloom?

Some blue-green algae produce toxins. Eventually, the toxins break down in the water and are destroyed naturally. Ingesting algae while they are still producing toxins can cause serious illness, particularly in pets, children, and the elderly. Residential drinking water taken from a lake with toxic blooms may be affected.

Signs of a Toxic Bloom:

- Large numbers of dead fish, waterfowl, or other animals.
- Sudden, unexplained sickness or death of a cat or dog, especially if it has algae on its mouth, legs, or feet.
- Skin rashes, irritation, sore throat, and sore, red eyes in humans after being in the water.
- AHS bloom advisory notices posted around the lake and online.

Blue-green algae is tiny organisms found in freshwater lakes, streams, and creeks all over the world. Blue-green algae is natural and common in Alberta lakes.

Despite being called algae, these organisms are actually bacteria (cyanobacteria). When conditions are right (lots of sunlight, warm temperature, extra nutrients), they can rapidly reproduce. Within a few days, a “clear” lake, pond, ditch, or dug-out can become cloudy with algae growth. This is called a bloom. Blue-green algae blooms usually float to the surface and can be several inches thick near the shoreline.

A Blue-green algae bloom:

- Often looks like green paint, scum, grass clippings, fuzz, or globs floating on the water.
- Usually appears bright green, but may also appear blue, green, green/brown, brown and/or red/pink in colour.
- Is most common in the summer and fall, but can occur anytime if conditions are suitable.



Blue-Green Algae Health Advisory

Phosphorus Feeds Algae



While blue-green algae is technically bacteria, it functions like plants by using nutrients such as phosphorus and photosynthesizing.

Items like detergents, fertilizer, manure, human waste, and decaying plants are all sources of phosphorus. When excess phosphorus enters the lake, it results in increased growth of algae. When mats of algae die, they sink to the bottom of the lake and decay, creating low-oxygen conditions that are detrimental to fish and other aquatic organisms. The decay process is also what causes the sulphurous ‘rotten eggs’ smell from lakes affected by algae.

Reducing the amount of phosphorus that enters the lake from your property will help control blue-green algae blooms on our local lakes, creeks, and streams.