A harmful algal bloom (HAB) is an overgrowth of algae in a water body that could affect water quality and aquatic life. Some HABs produced by bacteria can create toxins that may also harm people, animals, and the local environment.

**HOW TO IDENTIFY A HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM**
Algal blooms can make the water appear green, blue, brown, gold, or red.

Seeing colors, scum, mats, foam, or paint-like streaks in the water or clumps on the shore may indicate a bloom. However, only professional water testing can confirm if HABs and toxins are present. States often have monitoring programs for this purpose.

**SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE**
Vary depending on how the person or animal was exposed, and whether the HAB is in salt or fresh water.

- **Emerged?** Shower immediately. See a doctor or vet if symptoms occur.
  - Ear, eye, nose, skin, and throat irritation, and headache
  - Paralysis, respiratory illness, and seizures
  - Abdominal pain, diarrhea, liver and kidney damage, and vomiting
  - Drooling, diarrhea, low energy, not eating, stumbling, tremors, and vomiting

**WHEN IN DOUBT, STAY OUT!**
Stay away from the water when a suspected HAB is present.

- **DON'T** Play with scum or mats on the shore
- **DON'T** Let animals drink water, eat algae, or swim
- **DON'T** Swim
- **DON'T** Fish or wade
- **DON'T** Boat or kayak

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REPORT POSSIBLE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS:**
(***XXX)*** XXX-XXXX | xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.html