

2023 Toxic Algae Hot Zones: Peak Season Gets Underway Across the U.S.

BlueGreen Water Technologies Maps Harmful Algal Blooms and Urges Caution

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, August 29, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As peak season for harmful algal blooms gets underway, health officials and water managers are on watch and urging swimmers and pet owners to exercise caution. Today, water scientists with [BlueGreen Water Technologies](https://www.bluegreenwater.com/) released a map of 2023 Toxic Algae Hot Zones across the U.S.

"Our 2023 hot zones map shows the worst trouble spots as we head into peak season for harmful algal blooms," said [Eyal Harel](#), CEO, BlueGreen Water Technologies. "We tend to see the same water bodies impacted year after year. Notable this year is how early blooms arrived in many of these locations."

BlueGreen water scientists track the progression of harmful algal blooms year round using data from satellites, artificial intelligence, deep learning analysis, and drones.

"The 2023 season is being impacted by the climate pattern El Niño and marked by life-threatening extreme heat waves," said Harel.

Harmful algal blooms produce cyanotoxins that can jeopardize the health of people and pets,



damage aquatic ecosystems, threaten drinking water supplies, and harm local economies. Toxic blooms must be treated early in the season to alleviate the threat and break the pattern.

[Here](#) is a breakdown of the 2023 Toxic Algae Hot Zones:

- California: Hundreds of sea lions and dolphins have been killed or sickened by an offshore algae bloom caused by a rapid growth of *Pseudo-nitzschia*, which produces a neurotoxin called domoic acid. Farther up the coast, red tide has returned to San Francisco Bay. In 2022, a major red tide caused a mass casualty event, killing thousands of fish. Dozens of advisories are currently in effect throughout the state.
- Utah: One dog died and at least three others were sickened by toxic algal blooms in Utah's lower Virgin River in August. Harmful algae is also blamed for the deaths of 30 ducks at Salt Lake City's Liberty Park. Meanwhile, people are being told to watch out for blooms at popular recreation spots such as Utah Lake and Mantua Reservoir, with advisories spanning the state from north to south.
- Florida: This summer, as every summer, outbreaks of toxic blue-green algae are smothering lakes across the state. Extreme heat is helping to fuel the blooms, which are expected to worsen into September. The outbreaks follow a red tide event that killed fish and posed health risks to beachgoers beginning last fall until subsiding in early summer. The state has an excellent reporting system in place with more than 200 advisories issued in the past 30 days.
- Texas: Austin's Lady Bird Lake, Lake Austin, and Lake Travis are among the Texas water bodies once again suffering outbreaks of toxic algae, with warnings for people and pets to stay away. The algae arrived earlier than usual this year. City of Austin water officials conduct routine monitoring and testing for cyanotoxins in drinking water and recently conducted an emergency drill to practice response protocols should drinking water become contaminated.
- Pacific Northwest: Advisories are up across Oregon and Washington state warning of unsafe concentrations of cyanotoxins. A toxic bloom has spread across at least 11 miles of the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon, and health advisories are in effect for seven other water bodies in the state. Swimming beaches at Seattle, Washington's Green Lake are once again closed due to harmful algae and at least eight other lakes or ponds showed toxins at unsafe levels in the state.
- Kansas: The state's chronic problem with toxic algae returned again this summer with watches and warnings up for blooms in at least nine lakes, ponds, and reservoirs. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment is cautioning people to avoid contact with the water and to keep pets away.
Lake Champlain: Once again, beaches along parts of Lake Champlain are closed due to outbreaks of harmful algae, which arrived earlier than normal this year. Burlington's beaches have been closed 40 times this summer due to toxic blooms, an increase over last year.

- **Lake Erie:** Harmful algal blooms appeared earlier than normal in the western basin and by mid-August covered approximately 360 square miles. Per NOAA, the bloom extends from Monroe, MI to beyond Kellys Island, OH and extends into the western basin. Highest concentrations are observed in the nearshore waters from eastern Maumee Bay to east of Magee Marsh Wildlife Area. Sandusky Bay has a local bloom as well.
- **Massachusetts:** By mid-August, at least 17 advisories were posted for lakes and ponds across the state, with swimming banned amid warnings not to come into contact with infected water. The state has a new water quality dashboard providing an interactive map with updated information on water quality testing and beach closures.
- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin has experienced an increase in harmful algal bloom reports this year, according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. A massive toxic bloom appeared on Lake Mendota and Monona Bay earlier than normal this year. The state says most of its local health departments do not have the capacity to monitor for toxic algae at public beaches, so residents are urged to know the signs of harmful algal blooms.
- **Louisiana:** Algal blooms exploded across Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas and other southern Louisiana waterways in early summer. State monitoring detected high density blooms earlier than usual this year. Louisiana is experiencing an extreme heat wave, which could exacerbate the problem. In Baton Rouge, a \$65 million dredging project has begun on the University Lakes to increase water flow and reduce chronic outbreaks of harmful algae.
- **Iowa:** Every summer advisories go up at Iowa beaches warning the water is unsafe for swimming. The state is dealing with increasing outbreaks of harmful algae. Efforts are underway to reduce agricultural runoff, one of the factors contributing to the increase in outbreaks.

“Our 2023 map should serve as a wake up call,” said Harel. “Harmful algal blooms are a growing global threat, with more frequent and intense outbreaks fueled, in part, by climate change. We encourage states to step up their monitoring, tracking, and treatment efforts. And families, swimmers, and pet owners need to take precautions.”

Learn more about how to protect your family and pets from harmful algae [here](#).

About BlueGreen Water Technologies:

BlueGreen Water Technologies is leading the charge in helping preserve and promote life on Earth. We are restoring, safeguarding, and optimizing the health, safety, accessibility, and biodiversity of waterbodies worldwide – including their wildlife, aquatic life, ecosystems, and economies – by pioneering and applying proven scientific ingenuity and deep tech solutions. BlueGreen is the first and only company in the world to develop, obtain regulatory approval for, and commercialize a technology suite that reverses the effects of climate change in water bodies

and drastically reduces greenhouse gas levels. The multidisciplinary team of BlueGreen experts is exposing the secrets of lakes and oceans – detecting, analyzing, preventing and remediating some of the most complex and dynamic problems that plague the world's water systems.

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