



NEWS RELEASE

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The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

NMED launches harmful algal bloom advisory map *Interactive map shows current lake conditions statewide*



Overview of bloom near Quemado Lake dam (Photo Credit: NMED)

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department today announced the launch of its Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Advisory Map, providing the public with timely information on current algae bloom conditions at monitored lakes across New Mexico.

Accessible from both mobile devices and computers, the map will be updated throughout July through November — the peak season for algal blooms — as new monitoring data becomes available.

Harmful algal blooms, or HABs, occur when certain algae grow excessively in water, posing potential health risks to people and animals. HABs can appear blue, bright green, brown or red and may resemble scum or floating grass clippings on the water's surface. These blooms can produce toxins that are harmful to humans and animals.

HAB advisories provide guidance based on current water conditions.

For example, a **HAB Watch Advisory** means there is evidence that a harmful algal bloom is developing. Recommendations include:

- Do not drink untreated surface water or get it in your mouth.

- Avoid algae blooms while swimming and wading. Swimming is not recommended near visible blooms.
- Supervise and keep pets away from both water and shoreline algae and rinse them with clean water if contact occurs.
- Rinse fish with clean water prior to cooking thoroughly and eat only the fillet.

A **HAB Warning Advisory** usually means measured toxins exceed established safety thresholds. Recommendations for water under this level advisory include:

- Do not drink the water or get it in your mouth
- Do not swim or water ski.
- Adults should avoid algae blooms while wading.
- Supervise children and prevent them from entering the lake or playing near algae deposited on the shoreline.
- Keep dogs and other animals away.
- Avoid areas of algae when boating or paddleboarding.
- [Use caution when fishing](#) because the effects of HAB toxins on fish are not well understood. If you choose to fish, rinse fish with clean water prior to cooking thoroughly and eat only the fillet portion.

NMED encourages the public to review the [HAB Advisory Program Guidance](#) and check the [HAB Advisory Map](#) for the latest conditions and advisories before visiting a lake.

Current lakes under a HABs Advisory include:

- Quemado Lake, Catron County —HAB WARNING
- Clayton Lake, Union County —HAB WARNING
- Lower Charette Lake, Mora County —HAB WARNING
- El Vado Reservoir, Rio Arriba County – HAB WATCH
- Bluewater Lake, Cibola County —HAB WATCH
- Eagle Nest Lake, Colfax County —HAB WATCH
- Santa Cruz Lake, Santa Fe County —HAB WATCH

NMED will continue monitoring lake conditions as resources allow and encourages the public to help identify potential harmful algal blooms by reporting suspected HAB events through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [BloomWatch program](#).

The department reminds the public: if the water smells bad or looks scummy — like grass clippings floating on the surface, thick like paint or pea-green, blue-green, or brownish red in color — it's best to stay out. When in doubt, stay out.

More information about HABs can be found on [NMED's HABs Webpage](#), in NM Department of Health (NMDOH) HABs [Human Health](#) and [Animal Health](#) factsheets, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's [Fishing During HABs](#) website.

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