

Detected Presence of Toxic Algae in Loveless Lake
Public advised to take appropriate precautions to prevent illness and protect pets

Polk County Land and Water Resources and Public Health Departments have reported that water quality testing conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has indicated the presence of *Planktothrix rubescens* (blue-green algae) at Loveless Lake.

Planktothrix rubescens contains a red pigment that gives it a reddish-purple appearance. This pigment helps it to survive in low light conditions under the ice. *Planktothrix rubescens* is buoyant, so it floats near the surface of the water. This past winter, Loveless Lake had the perfect conditions for *Planktothrix rubescens* to increase in numbers. The spring thaw has indicated additional algae blooms floating throughout the lake.

Testing has confirmed that the detected **Planktothrix rubescens algae is toxic**. Currently, the lake water is not toxic. *Planktothrix rubescens* naturally produces a toxic substance that can cause illness or health effects in human or animals through direct contact, ingestion, or inhalation.

To protect yourself, family, or pets from illness:

- Do not touch mats of algae, scum layers, foam or other visible blooms of blue-green algae.
- Do not swim in areas where water is discolored or where you see foam, scum, or mats of algae on the water's surface.
- Do not eat fish organs, only fish filets. Rinse filets well with clean water before cooking or freezing. Wash your hands or shower off with soap and water after catching and cleaning fish.
- Do not let dogs drink or swim in lake water during an algal bloom.
- Do not let dogs eat algal scum or lick it off their fur.
- Always wash your hands or shower off with soap and water after participating in recreational water activities.
- Always wash pets with clean water immediately if he/she swims or wades in water during algal blooms.

At this time, no reports of illness related to activities within the lake have been reported. Informational signs notifying the public are posted at Loveless Lake.

Polk County will continue to monitor the conditions at Loveless Lake with the support from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

For more information, visit <http://www.polkcountyhealthdept.org>.