

# KEEPING SAFE AMID HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS (HABs)

## Exposure to Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) can be detrimental for people and animals.

However, the toxicity of an algae bloom cannot be confirmed with a visual inspection and suspected HABs must be sampled and tested at a lab to confirm the species of algae present before treatment can be started.

HABs can appear as blue or green paint spilled onto the water, thick puffy blue or green foam on the surface of the water, or swirling colors beneath the surface of the water. Harmful algal blooms can also have distinct smells, sometimes described as grassy, fishy, or septic.

If you suspect the presence of harmful algae, please take the following precautions:

- 1. Call a professional immediately:** It is impossible to tell from a visual inspection whether an algal bloom is toxic. It must be appropriately sampled and tested. Aquatic services companies like Clarke can help with this.
- 2. Avoid it:** Do not swim or wade through blue-green algal scums. Do not boat, water ski, jet ski, or fish where algal scum is present. Do not irrigate where present. And certainly, do not source drinking water where algal blooms are present!
- 3. Keep pets out:** Do not let your pets swim in or drink from the water. Toxic algae blooms can be deadly to pets with even short exposures to certain species being fatal.
- 4. Take extra precautions:** If you or your family members, including pets, have been in water with any algae present, always shower off with soap and clean water after swimming.

For more information regarding best practices to keep yourself, your family and any household pets safe from a potential HAB, please consult the below sources from the CDC.

- [General information on HABs](#)
- [Protect Yourself and Your Pets](#)
- [Sources of Exposure to HABs](#)



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### GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS

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