



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

July 15, 2020

**Harmful Algal Bloom Advisory  
for Little Mazarn Creek Outlet on Lake Hamilton**

**NORTH LITTLE ROCK**—The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment’s (E&E) Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a Harmful Algal Bloom Advisory for the Little Mazarn Creek outlet on Lake Hamilton. The public is advised to avoid contact with the lake in the affected area. Exposure to these toxins may result in headaches, weakness, shortness of breath, and gastrointestinal illnesses.

“Our water-quality scientists are monitoring the areas of the lake that are temporarily impacted and taking samples to assess toxicity levels,” stated Becky Keogh, E&E Secretary. “Advisory signs have been posted near lake access points, and we will continue to update the public as new information becomes available.”

Test results indicate samples collected on July 13 at sites within these areas contain potentially harmful algae (cyanobacteria) which exceed safe recreation levels. People and pets are advised to avoid water activities that pose a risk of ingesting water or exposure to skin.

“Persons should refrain from recreational water activities like swimming, kayaking, fishing, or even wading during a harmful algal bloom event,” advised Dr. Richard McMullen with the Arkansas Department of Health. “Contact with contaminated water can make people sick and even pets can be affected. No one, including pets, should ever drink contaminated water. Avoid contact with contaminated lake water. If you see an algal bloom, just stay out of the water and keep your pets out too.”

“If your pet does get into the water,” Dr. McMullen warns, “they should be washed off immediately with tap water. Don’t let them lick themselves clean because they may become sick. It’s always better to be safe than sorry.”

If you suspect a harmful algal bloom, avoid contact with the water and report it. Contact DEQ at [habs@adeq.state.ar.us](mailto:habs@adeq.state.ar.us) or call 501.682.0744. More information can be found on DEQ’s website: <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/water/pdfs/HAB-ResponsePlan-Manual-bookmarks-2019-12-12-Final.pdf>.

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