



FACT SHEET Blue Green Algae and Beaver Lake

- Blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria, are microscopic organisms commonly found in lakes and streams.
- Blue-green algae were one of the first forms of complex life on earth. They were present as much as 3.7 billion years ago!
- Photosynthesis by blue-green algae is likely responsible for our oxygen-rich atmosphere.
- Blue-green algae are present in Beaver Lake but not in concentrations that are an issue when it comes to “treating” the water so that it is safe to drink.
- Conventional water treatment -- sedimentation, filtration and disinfection -- has been shown to be effective at removing algae toxins.
- Beaver Water District takes water samples from Beaver Lake weekly. Samples are examined to get an accurate count and speciation on the types of algae present.
- Beaver Water District is committed to protecting the public health by providing safe, clean drinking water.
- Drinking water from Beaver Lake sometimes has an earthy taste and an odor. This is caused by blue-green algae that die as water temperatures begin to cool in the fall. However, the water is safe to drink.
- Blue-green algae may become very abundant (bloom) in warm, shallow, undisturbed water that receives a lot of sunlight.
- Nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen promote the growth of blue-green, as well as other alga.
- Blue-green algae can produce bright green, blue-green, yellow, brown or red blooms. Other algae, such as green algae or diatoms, also produce blooms.
- Some species of blue-green algae produce toxins that may be harmful to humans and other animals. The most common exposure to blue-green algal toxins is through direct bodily contact with surface scum of algae on the water.
- To avoid the harmful effect of blue-green algae toxins, do not swim in or let pets swim in water when surface scum is present.
- For more information, visit the [North American Lake Management Society](http://www.nalmsociety.org) webpage.

###

About Beaver Water District

Beaver Water District supplies drinking water to more than 330,000 people and industries in Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, Bentonville and surrounding areas. These cities then resell the water to surrounding towns and communities. The District's mission is to serve our customers' needs by providing high quality drinking water that meets or exceeds all regulatory requirements and is economically priced consistent with our quality standards. For more information, visit www.bwdh2o.org.