

FACT SHEET

Cyanobacteria and Beaver Lake

- Cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae, are microscopic organisms commonly found in lakes and streams. Cyanobacteria were one of the first forms of complex life on earth.
- **Beaver Water District is committed to protecting public health by providing safe, clean drinking water.**
- **Cyanobacteria are present in Beaver Lake but not in concentrations that are an issue for “treating” or cleaning the water to ensure the water is safe to drink.**
- **Beaver Water District routinely takes water samples from Beaver Lake.** Samples are examined to get an accurate count and to determine the types of algae present.
- **Drinking water from Beaver Lake sometimes has an earthy taste and an odor.** These taste and odor compounds come from a variety of microorganisms but are more often associated with cyanobacteria and diatom algae. However, taste and odor compounds do not pose any health risk and the water is safe to drink.
- Cyanobacteria and 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 algae and cyanobacteria.**
- Cyanobacteria can produce bright green, blue-green, yellow, brown, or red blooms. Other algae, such as green algae or diatoms can also produce blooms.
- **Some species of cyanobacteria produce toxins called cyanotoxins that may be harmful to humans and other animals.** Cyanobacteria can concentrate on the surface of water bodies forming a surface scum. Exposure to this surface scum through direct bodily contact is the most common exposure pathway to cyanotoxins. **The District has a cyanotoxin monitoring program in place.**

For more information, link to the North American Lake Management Society’s helpful Blue Green Algae page:

<https://www.nalms.org/inlandhabs/>

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About Beaver Water District

Beaver Water District supplies drinking water to 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 sustainably provide our customers with safe, economical drinking water. For more information, visit www.bwdh2o.org.