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News Release

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DEQ and GRDA Encourage Lake Visitors to be Cautious

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA) remind lake visitors of the possibility of Blue Green Algae (BGA) in Grand Lake. The two agencies continue to test and monitor lake waters.

BGA are microscopic organisms that are naturally present in lakes and streams, usually in low numbers. However, the algae can become abundant in shallow, warm water that receives heavy sunlight. While most BGA are not toxic, toxins can be produced in some algae blooms.

On Friday, June 24, the agencies confirmed the presence of BGA near Bernice State Park, in portions of Horse Creek and Duck Creek. On Wednesday, June 29, a BGA presence was also confirmed in Grand Lake's Ketchum Cove and Party Cove.

The GRDA Ecosystems Management Department also collected water samples from Woodard Hollow and Honey Creek on Wednesday. There is a potential for BGA in these areas of the lake and the public is encouraged to use common sense, and follow the DEQ advisories.

Additionally, people should be cautious when using fish cleaning stations and if watering lawns with lake water. Also, pets and livestock should not drink the water or swim in the affected areas. Finally, avoid areas of visible algae accumulation when boating.

"GRDA and ODEQ just want the public to remain careful and vigilant," said GRDA Corporate Communications Director Justin Alberty. "There are areas of the lake where BGA has been confirmed, and there are other areas being tested. We just want lake users to be aware."

According to information from a DEQ fact sheet, BGA may look like thick pea soup, green, bluish, brownish, or reddish-green paint. When it washes up on shore, it may look like a thick green mat. A link to that DEQ fact sheet is available on grda.com.

Alberty said GRDA has received several calls in recent days from lake area residents reporting possible areas of BGA.

"We appreciate that input," he said. "As we continue to test and monitor, we also want the public to notify us if they see areas where they suspect BGA to be present."

If you have suspicions of other possible outbreaks on Grand Lake, the public can contact the GRDA Ecosystems Department at (918) 256 0723 or jjaggars@grda.com.

Residents can also contact the Department of Environmental Quality at 1-800-522-0206.

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