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BLUE GREEN ALGAL BLOOM

Health Alert for Fellsmere WMA/Headwaters Lake, Fellsmere



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Fellsmere, FL Department of Health in Indian River County is correcting the location of the existing Health Alert for the presence of Microcystin Toxin. Blue green algae produce and release this toxin. Fellsmere WMA/Headwaters Lake is accessed through the parking area for the Stick Marsh.

Blue green algae (also known as cyanobacteria) can grow in many of Florida's waterbodies. Large concentration, called blooms can change the water color to blue, green, brown, orange or red. Blooms can appear year-round but are more frequent in summer and fall. Blue green algae can grow rapidly and sometimes form a foamy surface scum and an unpleasant odor. Because algae blooms can remove oxygen from the water, fish kills can occur.

Don't swallow, swim, wade, use personal watercraft, water ski or boat in waters where there are algae blooms. Algae blooms can cause ear, eye and skin reactions and hay fever and flu-like symptoms like diarrhea. Wash your skin and clothing with soap and water if you have contact with algae, discolored or smelly water.

Waters where there are algae blooms are not safe for animals. Pets and livestock should have a different source of water when algae blooms are present.

Don't cook or clean dishes with water contaminated by algae blooms. Boiling the water will not eliminate the toxins.

Filletts from healthy fish caught in freshwater lakes experiencing blooms are safe to eat. Rinse fish fillets with tap or bottled water, throw out the guts, and cook fish well. Do not eat shellfish from this location.

Attached is a map showing the location of the blue green algae bloom. For more information on algae blooms visit the Florida Department of Environmental Protection webpage <https://floridadep.gov/algalbloom>

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