

DRINKING WATER ADVISORY

CYANOTOXINS HAVE BEEN DETECTED IN COZY LAKE

IF YOU HAVE AN OLDER SHALLOW OR POORLY CONSTRUCTED WELL* IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO COZY LAKE, OR DRAW YOUR WATER DIRECTLY FROM COZY LAKE - IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU DO NOT DRINK THE TAP WATER OUT OF AN ABUNDANCE OF CAUTION

You may be at risk if your well:

- Was constructed prior to 1996 (prior to current protective construction standards)
 - Is a hand-dug well composed from brick, stone or concrete rings
- Has significantly lower water levels or dries up when nearby lake levels decline

Date Distributed 07/22/2023

Microcystin, a toxin produced by cyanobacteria, was detected at Cozy Lake. DEP is working to determine potential impact of the lake water to private wells along the lake. Samples collected on 07/05/2023 at Cozy Lake show Microcystin in the drinking water supplied by the lake at 1266.80 µg/L, which are above the Environmental Protection Agency's microcystin health advisory level of 1.6 µg/L for individuals greater than 6 years old and 0.3 µg/L for children 6 years old and younger.

Saxitoxin, another toxin produced by cyanobacteria, was found at 0.85 µg/L, which is above the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Division of Science and Research (DSR) guidance value of 0.11 µg/L for individuals greater than 6 years old and 0.025 µg/L for children 6 years old and younger.

Anatoxin-a, another toxin produced by cyanobacteria, was found at 1.11 µg/L, which is above the NJDEP DSR guidance value of 0.7 µg/L for children 6 years old and younger but not above the NJDEP DSR guidance value of 3.3 µg/L for individuals greater than 6 years old.

Cylindrospermopsin, another toxin produced by cyanobacteria, was detected at 0.04 µg/L, which is not above the NJDEP DSR guidance value levels of 0.2 µg/L for children 6 years old or younger or 1.0 µg/L for individuals greater than 6 years old.

WHY IS THERE AN ADVISORY?

- Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Blooms (cyanoHAB) is the name given to excessive growth of cyanobacteria (formerly known as blue-green algae) which occurs under suitable conditions (light, temperature, nutrients, etc.). These cyanobacteria can produce highly potent toxins, known as cyanotoxins, which can cause adverse health effects if consumed.
- The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed health advisory levels for microcystin and cylindrospermopsin that, if exceeded, are considered not safe for consumption. The NJDEP DSR drafted guidance values for microcystin, saxitoxin, anatoxin-a, and cylindrospermopsin that, if exceeded, are considered not safe for consumption.
- Cozy Lake in Jefferson Township is currently experiencing a severe HAB (all 4 cyanotoxins present with microcystin toxins that was confirmed on July 7, 2023, subsequently, in accordance with the Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Bloom Freshwater Recreational Response Strategy, a recreational warning was issued. The Jefferson Township Health Department was contacted on July 7, 2023, and [warning signs](#) were posted along the lake. Samples were collected

*[Water Quality Concerns for Lakefront Communities- https://www.state.nj.us/dep/hab/download/HAB_Lakes_Factsheet.pdf](https://www.state.nj.us/dep/hab/download/HAB_Lakes_Factsheet.pdf)

again on July 17, 2023, and subsequent analysis confirmed a warning status was still applicable. In response to the warning signs, on July 19, 2023, the Cozy Lake President contacted the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Water Monitoring, Standards and Pesticide Control (DWMSPC) with the concern that some of the properties around the lake have shallow wells that may be connected to the lake.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- If you receive water directly from Cozy Lake, have a shallow well, "point well" and/or "hand-dug" well, or your well is not functioning properly in close proximity to Cozy Lake, there could be a risk, and out of an abundance of caution, it is recommended that you Do Not Drink the tap water.
- **The NJDEP is seeking your assistance** to more accurately identify the risk that may be associated with the wells along Cozy Lake. If you are interested in having your tap sampled for cyanotoxins or have questions, please contact BFBMHABS@dep.nj.gov at any time (add "Cozy Lake" to the subject line) and/or 609-292-0427 during regular business hours.
- If you believe there is a potential risk based on the information provided above, alternative sources of water should be used for purposes such as drinking, brushing teeth, washing dishes, making infant formula, making ice and preparing food and beverages.
- **Do Not Boil the tap water.** Boiling the water will not destroy cyanotoxins and may increase the toxin levels.
- Everyone may use tap water for showering, bathing, washing hands, flushing toilets, cleaning and doing laundry. However, infants and young children under the age of six should be supervised while bathing and during other tap water-related activities to prevent accidental ingestion of water.
- Drinking water containing cyanotoxin levels exceeding the EPA health advisories or NJDEP DSR guidance values could put you at risk of various adverse health effects including upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhea as well as liver and kidney damage. Seek medical attention if you or family members are experiencing illness.
- Animals may be vulnerable to adverse health effects of cyanotoxin at the detected levels indicated above; consider providing animals alternative sources of water. Contact a veterinarian if animals show signs of illness. For more information on pet risk see, [Harmful Algal Blooms and Pets factsheet](#), available here: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/hab/download/habs_pet_factsheet2020.pdf
- If you, your family members, or your animals have experienced adverse cyanotoxin-related health effects including upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhea, please contact your healthcare provider and advise the Jefferson Township Health Department at 973-208-6120 or email health@jeffersontownship.net.
- Please refer to this factsheet, [*Water Quality Concerns for Lakefront Communities](#), available also at: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/hab/download/HAB_Lakes_Factsheet.pdf, and make sure your well has been properly installed, maintained, and is undergoing routine testing.

WHAT IS BEING DONE?

- Cozy Lake community is currently evaluating potential treatment with their Lake Management Firm to address the harmful algal bloom and accompanying cyanotoxins.
- The NJDEP with cooperation from local public health and emergency response agencies are working to address and monitor the situation.
- The Jefferson Township Health Department/NJDEP may contact you to request your cooperation in collecting a tap water sample for laboratory analysis.
- The local Health Department will send updated advisories/lifting advisories as conditions change.
- For more information regarding potential health impacts from cyanotoxins, please contact the the Jefferson Township Health Department at 973-208-6120 or email health@jeffersontownship.net. If you have general questions regarding cyanotoxins, please contact BFBMHABS@dep.nj.gov at any time (add "Cozy Lake" to the subject line) and/or 609-292-0427 during regular business hours.

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