TOMPKINS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

*Your Partner for a Healthy Community*

Frank Kruppa – Public Health Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, September 11, 2018

For questions regarding drinking water or recreational water activities, contact the Environmental Health Division: 607-274-6688

For HAB-related health symptoms, contact Community Health Services: 607-274-6604

**HABs Alert: Harmful Blue-Green Algae in Dryden Lake**

(Ithaca, NY – September 11, 2018) – The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has reported multiple blue-green algae blooms, also known as HABs (Harmful Algal Blooms), in Cayuga Lake and recently in Dryden Lake this summer and monitoring is continuing. These blooms may be small in size and confined to specific areas of the shoreline and bays. Areas where blooms are not observed can continue to be used for recreational use.

The Tompkins County Health Department urges residents and visitors to *beware* of blue-green algae. These blooms can occur in any calm body of water and may produce toxins that are harmful to people and animals. Do not drink the water and avoid contact with the water if it appears discolored or has an unpleasant odor. To learn more about HABs and for links to other resources, click here:

<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh/water/algae>

If contact occurs with suspicious blue-green algae,

* **Rinse thoroughly** with clean water to remove algae. Rinse dogs that may have gone in the water so that they do not lick their coats.
* Stop using water and **seek medical attention immediately** if symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, skin, eye or throat irritation, allergic reactions or breathing difficulties occur after drinking or having contact with blooms or untreated surface water.

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, Discover Cayuga Lake, and the Community Science Institute (CSI) have organized volunteers to conduct HAB monitoring in Cayuga Lake this year. These “HAB Harriers” have been trained to identify HABs and monitor selected locations on the shoreline on a weekly basis. The results are available on the CSI website:

<http://www.communityscience.org/cayuga-lake-2018-harmful-algal-blooms-results/>

Information on these and other blooms are reported by the DEC and are available at: <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh/water/algae>

Report any HAB-related health symptoms to the NYS Health Department at harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov or call the Tompkins County Health Department at (607) 274-6604.

* If you see a suspicious bloom, stay out of the water and report the bloom to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation at Habshotline@gmail.com .
* Please fill out and submit a Suspicious Algal Bloom Report Form, found here: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/suspalgformedit.pdf>. Email the completed form and, if possible, attach digital photos (close-up and landscape to show extent and location) of the suspected bloom to Habshotline@gmail.com.

For more information about the Health Department go to <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/health>.

Also, follow us on Facebook @TompkinsPublicHealth and Twitter @TompkinsHealth

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