



Algae Fact Sheet

Where are algae?

- Algae are a common form of bacteria found naturally in marine and freshwater environments.
- They produce their own food through photosynthesis and are vital for the well-being of marine and fresh-water ecosystems.

When do algae bloom?

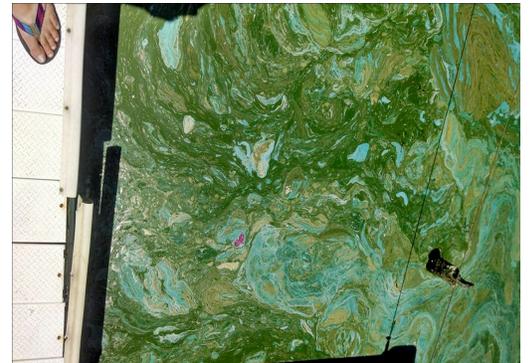
- Conditions for algae blooms are ideal when there is an oversupply of nutrients in a lake, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, high temperatures, low oxygen levels in the water, and little water movement.
- Algae blooms result when phytoplankton, organisms living on water surfaces, reproduce exuberantly.
- In a balanced ecosystem, phytoplankton are food base for organisms. However, with an oversupply of nutrients, they experience excessively high growth rates that result in algal blooms.

Are algae bad for the lake?

- In a balanced ecosystem, most algae are conducive to a healthy water body that sustains itself.
- However, **excessive algae growth** reduces water clarity, releases a strong odor, and suffocates aquatic life forms by depleting oxygen levels and blocking sunlight.

What are Blue-Green Algae (BGA)?

- While BGA looks very similar to normal algae, it is actually not an algae at all, but a **cyanobacteria** naturally found in fresh water and salt.
- Similar to algae, cyanobacteria uses photosynthesis, as well as nitrogen and phosphorus as food.
- Not all BGA blooms are harmful, as only **very specific** strains produce toxins that can cause irritation, rashes, or illness in humans and animals.



What should resident do when they see an algae bloom?

- Immediately report the bloom to Canyon Lake Property Owner's Association at (951) 244-6841.
- Refrain from going into water that is foamy, scummy, pea-green, blue-green, brownish red, or looks like floating paint. When in doubt, stay out!
- Keep pets and children away from playing in or drinking the water until the algae bloom subsides and drops to the lake bottom.

Will the alum treatments help reduce algae blooms?

- The alum treatments are designed to reduce the legacy phosphorus levels in Canyon Lake often released back into the water column.
- Since phosphorus is a critical element needed for algae to bloom, it is believed that the alum treatments will help reduce algae production.

Formed in April 2000, the Lake Elsinore and San Jacinto Watersheds Authority is a joint powers authority entrusted with \$15 million in state and local funds to improve water quality and wildlife habitats, in Lake Elsinore, as well as in Canyon Lake and the surrounding watersheds.