

September 26, 2022

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Health Advisory Issued for Harmful Algal Bloom at Murtaugh Lake**

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO - South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is issuing a public health advisory for Murtaugh Lake after recent testing from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) show a cyanotoxin, Microcystin, is now at unhealthy levels in the reservoir. Increased levels of this toxin are caused by harmful algal blooms (HABs) in the water. This is the second body of water in our region with a confirmed HAB in 2022. On September 6, SCPHD issued a health advisory for Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir that is still active.

The public is advised to take the following steps to protect their health:

- Avoid exposure to water in reservoirs under a HAB health advisory. Make sure children, pets, and livestock are not exposed to the water.
- Do not drink water with a HAB advisory. Boiling and disinfecting DO NOT remove toxins from water.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae
- If fishing in HAB water, remove all fat, skin, and organs before cooking. Toxins are more likely to collect in those tissues. Wash hands after handling.

HABs are not unusual in warm summer months and typically shrink quickly as the water temperature drops in mid to late fall. SCPHD will issue another press release when DEQ tests show these reservoirs are at safe cyanotoxin levels again.

More information is available at <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/health-wellness/environmental-health/safe-water>.