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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health Advisory Issued for Harmful Algal Bloom at
Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir**

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO - South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is issuing a public health advisory for Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir after recent testing from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) shows levels of a cyanotoxin, Microcystin, are now at unhealthy levels in the reservoir. Increased levels of this toxin are caused by toxin-producing cyanobacteria. Exposure to this toxin can be harmful to people, pets, and livestock.

When recreating at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir 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 you choose to eat fish from HAB water, remove all fat, skin, and organs before cooking. Toxins are more likely to collect in those tissues. Wash hands after handling.

“Children and pets are especially at risk,” said Josh Jensen, SCPHD Environmental Health Director. “These toxins can cause acute health effects in humans such as eye, ear, and skin irritation as well as gastrointestinal distress, and they can severely affect neurological systems.”

Cyanobacteria are a natural part of Idaho’s water bodies. When temperatures rise, their populations can bloom and toxic chemical compounds, or cyanotoxins, can be released into the water. Blooms don’t all look the same. They may look like mats, foam, spilled paint, or surface scum, and have a foul odor. Mats can be out of sight on the bottom of the water body.

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 toxin levels in this reservoir are at safe levels again.

More information is available at:

- <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/health-wellness/environmental-health/idaho-recreational-waters>
- <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/cyanobacteria-harmful-algal-blooms/>