

**NEWS RELEASE****Communications & Legislative Services ■ Phone: 402-471-9108 ■ Fax: 402-471-3996 ■ [www.dhhs.ne.gov](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov)**

*Issued jointly from the*

*Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Public Health*

*Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality*

*Nebraska Game and Parks Commission*

*UN-L Water Quality Extension Program*

August 2, 2013

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**Health Alert Issued for Swan Creek Lake 5A in Saline County**

The state has issued a health alert for toxic blue-green algae at Swan Creek Lake 5A in Saline County. This is the only health alert currently in effect.

Weekly sampling has been conducted at 50 public lakes in Nebraska since the beginning of May. Samples taken earlier this week at Swan Creek Lake 5A were above the state's health alert threshold of 20 parts per billion (ppb) of total microcystin (a toxin released by certain strains of blue-green algae.) The alert will continue at the lake for at least two more weeks, because lakes that are on health alert must have two consecutive weeks of readings below the threshold before the alert is discontinued.

When a health alert is issued, signs are posted to advise the public to use caution, and designated swimming beaches are closed during the alert. Recreational boating and fishing are permitted, but the public is advised to avoid activities that could involve accidental ingestion of water and to avoid full immersion in water. People can still use the public areas for camping, picnics and other outdoor activities.

The lakes will continue to be monitored weekly throughout the 2013 recreational season. Sampling results for toxic algae and bacteria will be updated every Friday and posted on NDEQ's web site, [www.deq.ne.gov](http://www.deq.ne.gov).

(For more information about potential health effects of toxic blue-green algae, what to look for, and steps to avoid exposure, please refer to the  [Fact Sheet](#).)