



For Immediate Release

RE: Muskrat Lake – Blue-Green Algae

Whitewater Region, Ontario – July 5, 2022

The Township of Whitewater Region is working closely with Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA), Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU), and the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) as a result of a suspected Blue-Green Algae (BGA) bloom observation on Muskrat Lake

Sampling and testing are currently underway, in partnership with the noted agencies, and results are expected in the coming days. Out of an abundance of caution, the Township will be closing the Cobden Beach to swimming and recreational purposes until results are received. Accordingly, signage will be placed at the beach.

The Township's drinking water system operator, Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) collects water samples for Blue-Green Algae (BGA) weekly in the raw water intake and treatment protocols at the Cobden Water Treatment Plant are in place. Please note that although blue-green algae may have been detected in the lake, no BGA have been found in the municipal drinking water and is still safe to drink. There is no public health risk for residents of Cobden who are on the municipal drinking water system.

As expressed in the Renfrew County District Health Unit media release, "*blue-green algae blooms are a natural seasonal phenomenon that may appear in lakes, rivers and ponds*" and "*some species have the potential to produce toxins which may be harmful to people and animals.*" The RCDHU "*recommends that people using Muskrat Lake ... for recreational or drinking water purposes, should become familiar with blue-green algae so they can make informed decisions about using the water.*"

Additional advisory information are noted in today's Renfrew County and District Health Unit's media release - [Blue-Green Algae Bloom Found—Muskrat Lake](#). Also, refer to MECP website for more information on blue-green algae - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae> and the Township's Website: <https://www.whitewaterregion.ca/services/environmental/drinking-water-systems/>

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