When Good Algae Go Bad

Algae are an essential part of the lake food web, but high levels of nutrients like phosphorus

and nitrogen in our lakes
can contribute to large,
unsightly algal blooms.
Some algae species
(called blue-green
algae or cyanobacteria)
can produce toxins that
are harmful to pets, people,
and wildlife. EPA detected the
algal toxin microcystin in 50%
of lakes, but very rarely at
levels that represent
moderate or high

What You Can Do

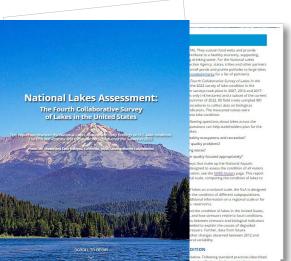
Play it safe: keep people and pets away from water that is green, scummy or smells bad. Report algae blooms to your local or state health department or environmental agency. Learn more at epa.gov/habs/what-you-can-do.



risk to the public.

How to Learn More

In the last 15 years, EPA and its partners conducted four large scientific studies of the environmental conditions in and around U.S. lakes. At EPA's website for the National



Lakes Assessment, you can view the latest report, explore the data, and more. Visit: epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/nla.