
OHA role related to Harmful Algal Blooms in Oregon

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PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Drinking Water Services

Oregon
Health
Authority

Health Effects

- Cyanobacteria can produce toxins
- Skin exposure can cause a red, raised rash or irritation.
- Symptoms from ingesting: headaches, cramps, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, numbness, dizziness, fever.
- Ingestion can have long-term effects on liver and kidneys
- Children, pets, livestock, wildlife are at increased risk



HABs and Protecting Public Health

OHA's role:

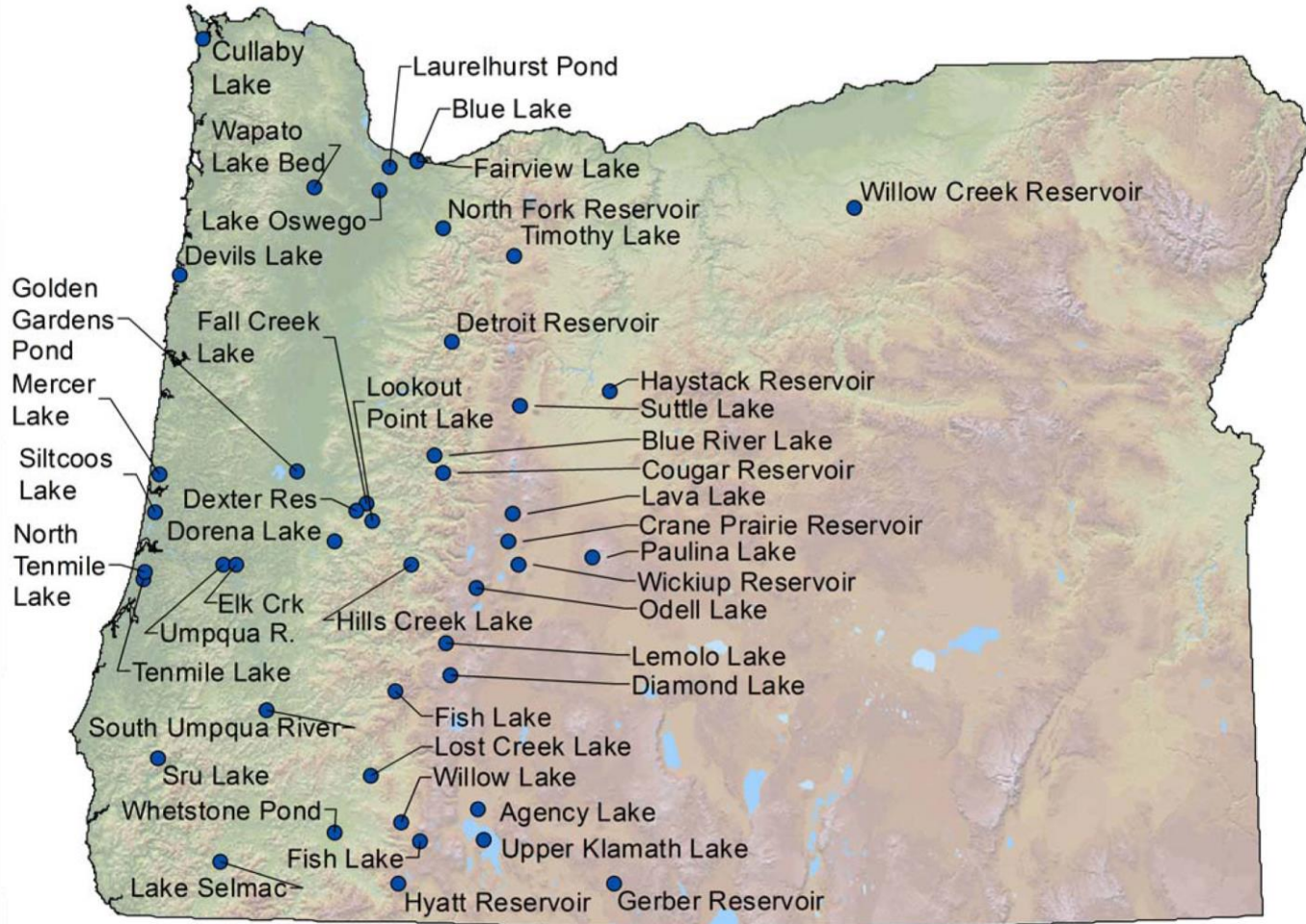
- Recreational Use Advisories. Evaluate available HABs information and data for a water body and determine whether a recreational advisory is warranted based on current advisory guidance and protocol.
- Regulate Public Water Supplies. Require public drinking water systems with sources susceptible to HABs to monitor for cyanotoxins at their intakes and take appropriate action in the event of detections.

Recreational Use Advisories

- Sampling of water bodies is voluntary and based on cooperation of several local, state and federal agencies
- Not all water bodies are monitored.
- OHA Environmental Health staff review available data against health-based Recreational Use Values to determine if an Advisory is warranted.
- Use Advisories are non-regulatory, public information.

Locations of past Recreational Advisories

Lakes, reservoirs, rivers and creeks that had an Oregon Health Authority harmful algal bloom advisory through 2011



Drinking Water--Salem Crisis of 2018

- Cyanotoxins are not regulated contaminants under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Extensive voluntary monitoring by City of Salem was effective in detecting cyanotoxins in May 2018.
- Issued a Do Not Drink advisory for vulnerable populations based on EPA Health Advisory Levels, EPA guidance, and after consultation with OHA and EPA. Advisory in place for 33 days until additional treatment installed.

Drinking Water Regulations

- OHA adopted emergency regulations in July 2018 requiring about 100 water systems to: sample biweekly for cyanotoxins, report data and issue public notices if health advisory levels are exceeded.
- 8 water systems had raw water detections. None in treated drinking water. No new advisories.
- Permanent regulations adopted in December 2018. Require 58 water systems to sample biweekly May-Oct using an ORELAP certified lab or DEQ lab.

Drinking Water Regulations – Lab Testing

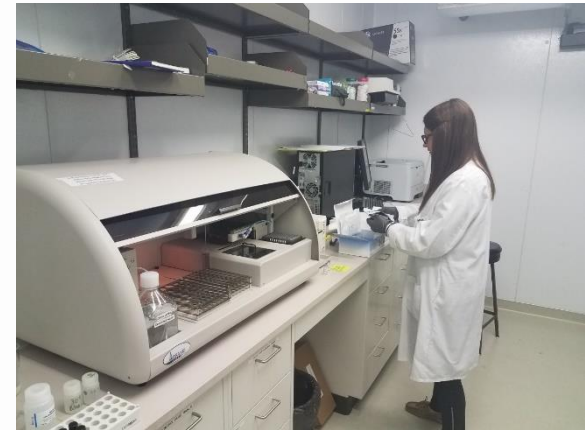
- The Oregon Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ORELAP), part of the State Public Health Laboratory, accredits labs that test public drinking water.
- ORELAP has received applications from 5 labs seeking accreditation:

Private:

- Babcock Laboratories, Inc
- Eaton Eurofins Analytical, LLC

Public Water Systems:

- EWEB (Eugene) Water Quality Lab
- City of Salem Willow Lake Lab
- Clackamas River Water Quality Lab





Questions?



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