

### Kirkman's Cove Lake Put on Health Alert Status

(KLZA) Water tests collected on July 23 have confirmed that toxic algae levels at Kirkman's Cove Recreation Area near Humboldt have exceeded limits set for safe contact with the water. Therefore, the lake has been placed on "Health Alert Status", which means it will be closed effective immediately to all body contact activities including swimming, wading, and water skiing.

Nemaha NRD officials report that the recreation area itself remains open, and all other usual activities such as boating, picnicking, camping, and hiking are permitted. Fishing is still allowed, though anglers are encouraged to practice "catch and release" as the toxins could be present in the liver, intestines, and pancreas of fish.

Visitors to the park are cautioned not to ingest or make contact with the water and to particularly make sure children and pets do not come into contact with the water. Most of the risk associated with this form of algae is limited to skin irritations; however, gastrointestinal illness and liver disease could result from ingestion of the water.

Signs have been posted at the lake informing visitors of the water restrictions at Kirkman's Cove, which will remain in effect until further notice. Because of the high readings, the beach must remain closed until results drop below safety limits for two consecutive weeks. NRD staff collect water samples each Monday, but test results are not available until the end of the week. Therefore the health alert will extend until at least August 9 and longer if levels do not drop.

NRD personnel continue to monitor the waters at all of its public recreation areas weekly and, if necessary, will issue alerts via local news media and the Nemaha NRD's website, [www.nemahanrd.org](http://www.nemahanrd.org). In addition, the District maintains a message on its voicemail system for those checking on the lakes' status after business hours. Lake visitors should note, however, that the levels of toxic algae can change dramatically in a short period of time. Therefore, if you observe toxic algae, which resembles bright green paint on the lake surface, avoid contact with the water.

For more information on toxic blue-green algae or to view the status of lakes sampled in Nebraska, click on the "Environmental Alerts" button on the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's web site [www.deq.state.ne.us](http://www.deq.state.ne.us); or contact the Nemaha NRD in Tecumseh at (402) 335-3325.

Many Signals Communications