



July 17, 2020

### Blue-green algae warning for Lake Eildon and Tullaroop Reservoir

Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is warning customers and the public to avoid direct contact with water in both Lake Eildon and Tullaroop Reservoir after monitoring detected high levels of blue-green algae.

Warning signs will be positioned at major recreational areas around Lake Eildon and Tullaroop Reservoir and will remain in place while high levels of blue-green algae are present. Lake Eildon and Tullaroop Reservoir will not be closed to the public.

Visitors to the lake and reservoir can still sightsee and enjoy other activities that do not involve direct contact with the water.

Blue-green algae occur naturally in waterbodies. They contain toxins that are harmful to humans and animals. Characteristic signs of algae contact are skin rashes or itchiness; sore eyes, ears and nose; or if swallowed, nausea or vomiting.

#### GMW recommends:

- People and pets avoid contact with the water.
- People who come into contact with affected water should wash affected skin immediately in clean cold water.
- Seeking an alternative water supply for stock and pets where possible.
- Do not use affected water for cooking, drinking, washing or showering. Boiling the affected water will not make it safe for these purposes.
- Reading GMW's fact sheet and other information on blue green algae at GMW's blue-green algae webpage (<https://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/bga>) to be informed of the risks.

It is not possible to predict how long the algae will remain at high levels and GMW will continue to monitor the situation in Lake Eildon and Tullaroop Reservoir.

A blue-green algae warning also remains current for Lake Eppalock.

Keep up to date with current blue-green algae warnings at <https://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/bga> or by ringing 1800 013 357 and selecting the option for blue-green algae information.

Water supplied by GMW is not suitable for human consumption without first being properly treated. Human consumption includes showering, bathing, washing, cooking, ice making and drinking.

For more information about blue-green algae and your health, visit [health.vic.gov.au](http://health.vic.gov.au) or phone NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24.

*Ends*

**Media Contact:** Kayla Maskell  
**Telephone:** 0404 973 841



@GMWaterNews

20 July 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Blue-Green Algae Warning for Lake Eildon**

Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) has detected high blue-green algae levels within Lake Eildon.

Blue-green algae present a risk to the health of humans and animals. The algae detected may cause gastroenteritis if ingested. Characteristic signs of algae contact are skin rashes or itchiness; sore eyes, ears and nose; or if swallowed, nausea or vomiting.

The situation is being closely monitored and the following precautions are recommended:

- People and pets should avoid contact with the water.
- People who come into contact with the water should wash affected skin immediately in clean cold water.
- Untreated water should never be used for human consumption (e.g. drinking, cooking, showering, bathing, washing).
- Boiling the affected water will not make it safe to use. Blue-green algae release toxins into the water when heated.
- Seek an alternative water supply for stock and pets where possible.
- Water can be used on gardens, however water should **not** be sprayed on vegetables and fruit.
- Stock should be kept away from recently irrigated areas for at least 7 days.

You can determine if the warning is still current by visiting the GMW website <https://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/bga> or by ringing 1800 013 357.

Further information on blue-green algae can also be found on the GMW and Agriculture Victoria websites (<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/soil-and-water/irrigation/blue-green-algae-and-irrigation-water>)

*Please remember that water supplied by GMW is not suitable for human consumption without first being properly treated.*

Yours sincerely



Greg Smith  
MANAGER WATER QUALITY



# Houseboats

## Blue-green Algae Factsheet



For further information, including other blue-green algae factsheets and current blue-green algae warnings, visit [www.gmwater.com.au](http://www.gmwater.com.au)

### Why is there a warning?

Low levels of blue-green algae are present in water all the time, however the Victorian government sets a maximum level considered safe. Public Warnings are issued by GMW when the level of blue-green algae exceeds safe levels.

### Is Lake Eildon closed?

No. Houseboating, fishing, sightseeing and other fun activities that do not involve direct water contact can still be enjoyed, although care needs to be taken.



### Can I swim, ski and wake board?

It is recommended not to undertake any activity that involves direct skin contact with the water.

### I can't see any blue-green algae, is it safe to go in?

Blue-green algae are very small and can be present in water at high levels even when there is no obvious change to the colour of water. A visual inspection can therefore not be relied upon for determining whether it is safe to go in the water.

### Can I still use the water in my houseboat?

This depends greatly on your water supply and treatment facilities within your houseboat.

Water taken directly from any lake or river is not fit for any use that may involve human consumption without first being properly treated.

Human consumption includes showering, bathing, washing, cooking, ice making and drinking.

There are commercial systems that can be purchased for treating raw supplies, and can be found by searching the internet or business directories for "Water Treatment & Equipment".

The Department of Health & Human Services has a brochure on Private Drinking Water Supplies that GMW recommends reading, it's available at <http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/water/public-health/private-drinking-water>



### Will boiling the water make it safe?

No. Boiling the water bursts the blue-green algae cells and releases toxins into the water. The toxins are not able to be destroyed by boiling. Drinking or showering in untreated water is particularly unsafe.

