

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## NEWS RELEASE

July 31, 2013

For Immediate Release

### Blue-Green Algae Found in Oneida Lake

Oneida County Health Department officials said today that blue-green algae blooms, which could pose a health risk to people and pets exposed to large quantities of the algae, have been found in parts of Oneida Lake.

*"At this time the algae blooms are evident in the North Shore area of the lake, which is outside of Oneida County,"* Dr. Daniel W. Gilmore, Director of Environmental Health said. He continued, *"The Oneida County Health Department will monitor the situation and advise the Village of Sylvan Beach, campers and bathers should it become necessary."*

According to health officials, blue-green algae produce toxins that pose health risks when direct contact is made or when airborne droplets containing high levels of the toxins are inhaled resulting in irritation of the eyes, skin, nose and throat, as well as inflammation of the respiratory tract. Other symptoms of exposure to the toxins may include nausea and vomiting,

At this time the area of the lake affected by the algae blooms is in Oswego County but that could change since the blooms can migrate as a result of winds and tides, according to Gilmore. Gilmore added, "In the meantime, we want people to be aware of the presence of the algae in the lake and to take appropriate precautions when in the water. He offered the following recommendations when the lake water is contaminated with blue-green algae:

**Don't swim or wade near blooms or surface scum.**

**Don't drink the water.**

**Keep children and pets away from any blooms or scum.**

**Rinse with clean water if exposed.**

**Consider medical attention if you have symptoms of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, skin, eye or throat irritation or breathing difficulties after contact with blue-green algae.**

Gilmore urged residents to contact the Oneida County Health Department at 798-5064 or visit the health department's website at [www.ocgov.net/oneida/health](http://www.ocgov.net/oneida/health) if they have additional questions or concerns about blue-green algae.