

Media Release



Blue-green algae Red Alert for Darling River at Rose Isle located between Bourke and Louth. Stock and domestic warning.

23 January 2019

A red alert level warning (high alert) for blue-green algae has been issued for Darling River at Rose Isle located approximately 50km below Bourke towards Louth.

A red alert level warning indicates that people should not undertake recreational activities where they may come into direct contact with the water such as swimming, as well as domestic uses including showering and washing. Contact with the water may also pose a threat to livestock and pets.

This alert is applicable for the areas of the Darling River upstream and downstream of the site Rose Isle. The algae numbers detected are very high, domestic users along this section of the Darling River should seek alternate water supplies.

This water should not be used for stock watering and it is recommended that stock access be restricted to the river as the algae species detected is known to be potentially toxic. People camping along the river are urged not to use the water sourced from the river and not let their pets near the water. Boiling the water will not remove toxins.

People are advised not to enter the water, drink untreated water or bathe in water drawn from the river while this red alert level warning is in place. Town water supplies remain unaffected and safe to drink.

Blue-green algae usually appear as green paint-like scums on the water, near the edges, or as greenish clumps throughout the water. It makes the water appear dirty, green or discoloured and generally has a strong musty or earthy odour.

People should not eat mussels or crayfish from red alert warning areas. Any fish caught should be cleaned and washed thoroughly in uncontaminated water and any internal organs disposed of before consumption.

Blue-green algae occur naturally and can reproduce quickly in favourable conditions where there is still or slow-flowing water, abundant sunlight and sufficient levels of nutrients.

It is not possible to predict how long the algae will remain at high levels. Regular monitoring will continue and the alert will be lifted as soon as the high levels of algae dissipate.

People who believe they may have been affected by blue-green algae are advised to seek medical advice.

Updates about blue-green algae blooms and red level warning areas can be obtained by calling **1800 999 457** or visiting – <http://www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/algae>

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