

Blue-Green Algae Ecology and Toxicity: Human and Animal Health Implications

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Blue-green algae blooms are increasing in frequency, and severity throughout the world. The blooms are a result of increased nutrients to water bodies and/or an imbalance between the nitrogen and phosphorus availability. Several blue-green taxa can form dense blooms. These blooms are unsightly and potentially toxic to organisms, including humans. The reports of blue-green blooms are increasing in several states surrounding Idaho. Anecdotal reports suggest it is occurring in Idaho as well, but sampling blue-green blooms is not a focus of monitoring programs in the state. In this presentation we discuss the common forms of blue-green algae in the area, potential for toxin production, as well as sampling techniques that can be used to get a better handle on the problem within the region.