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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Lakes Tested for Harmful Algal Blooms After Dogs Became Sick

South Central Idaho – The South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) encourage residents to brush up on their knowledge of harmful algal blooms, after several reports of dogs becoming sick while playing in local lakes.

The DEQ investigated each report, testing the concentration of cyanobacteria (sometimes called blue-green algae) in both Penny Lake and Dollar Lake. Those tests came back negative for toxins, showing there were no harmful algal blooms at the time.

"This is a good reminder to make sure you know what to look for and how to report a harmful algal bloom," said Josh Jensen, SCPHD program manager. "The likelihood of a HAB in our local lakes goes up as summer temperatures heat the water and encourage algae to grow. With such a low water year, we may be seeing them earlier than usual."

You can help by reporting suspicious looking water to DEQ by phone, email, with the bloomWatch app, or online at https://www.deq.idaho.gov/about-us/contact-us/report-an-environmental-concern/.

Common indicators of an algal bloom:

- The water has foam, scum, algal mats, or paint-like streaks on the surface
- The water looks discolored
- The water smells unusually bad

If you see a bloom, stay out of the water and keep your pets out of the water. Do not fish, swim, boat, or play water sports. You cannot tell if a bloom is harmful by looking at it, so it is best to use caution and stay away.

If your pet begins to show signs of toxic exposure after playing in a reservoir or lake, connect with your vet immediately for treatment.

More information is available at https://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/cyanobacteria-harmful-algal-blooms/

Learn more about identifying a harmful algal boom here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBhcrryEA4c