

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BLUE GREEN ALGAE DISCOVERED IN THE NORTH FORK OF THE ST. LUCIE RIVER

***Residents are urged to avoid contact with the water near the
Ballantrae Golf Club in Port St. Lucie***

The St. Lucie and Martin County Health Departments are issuing a warning to avoid contact with the St. Lucie River near the Ballantrae Golf Club after tests confirmed blue green algae in that area. Residents are also warned to avoid any areas of the river with visible algae growth.

The type of algae found, *Microcystis aeruginosa*, also known as cyanobacteria, can release a toxin that is harmful to humans and pets. Further testing is currently being conducted to determine if the toxin was present.

Contact with water containing the algae can cause skin irritation and hay fever-like symptoms. Residents should also take precautions to prevent their dogs from wading in or drinking the water in that area.

Blue green algae are commonly found in fresh water ponds and rivers in Florida. Sunlight, temperature and water's nutrients play a role in causing the algae to multiply.

Residents are asked to call Mary Murphy at the Department of Environmental Protection at (772)-398-2806, if they observe blue green algae in their community.

For more information: www.myfloridaeh.com/medicine/aquatic/cyanobacteria.htm

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