

Media Release

Lithgow City Council



17 February 2011

ALGAE HIGH ALERT FARMERS CREEK

Lithgow City Council has issued a water quality alert for Farmers Creek downstream of the Geordie Street Crossing.

The public is advised to avoid direct bodily contact with water from Farmers Creek, following routine monitoring results indicating high levels of potentially toxic blue-green algae. Warning signs are being placed by Council along Farmers Creek where high algae concentrations have been found.

“Algae may be toxic to humans and animals so contact with or use of the water from a high alert area should be avoided and alternative water supplies should be sought,” said the Mayor.

People are advised not to enter the water or to drink untreated or boiled water from Farmers Creek because of the risk of eye and skin irritations and stomach upsets.

“Contact with blue-green algae can cause skin rashes, eye and ear infections, vomiting and diarrhoea, mouth ulcers, sore throat and asthma symptoms. Anyone experiencing a reaction should seek medical help,” said the Mayor.

Dogs and stock are particularly at risk and owners should keep dogs away from high alert areas and provide alternative watering points for stock.

People should not eat mussels and yabbies caught or collected in water affected by blue-green algae. It is also recommended that people not eat the liver and gut of fish caught in affected water. Other parts of the fish may be eaten but they may taste muddy or earthy.

For further information, contact Council's Water and Waste Manager on (02) 6354 9999, between 8.30am and 4:30pm weekdays, or email lithgow@lithgow.nsw.gov.au or the Toll-Free Algal Information Line on 1800 999 457

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