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## Blue-green algae: keep away

Residents who live on Upper Prior Lake have complained about unpleasant blue-green algae blooms that have kept them — and their pets — out of the water.

The city of Prior Lake and the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District have fielded complaints about blue-green algae growth on Upper Prior in the past week in particular. The algal blooms are worse in summer months and pose a particular threat to pets, who often go into the water regardless of how it looks. Blue-green algae contains a toxin that can be harmful if ingested. In other communities, dogs have even died after swimming in lakes with toxic algal blooms.

"The water quality on upper Prior Lake has been



PRIOR LAKE-SPRING LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT PHOTO

**This Oct. 3 photo from the watershed district shows the extent of algal blooms on Upper Prior Lake.**

consistently bad all summer," said Mary Steinhoff, who lives on Butternut Circle. "We've not been able to swim from our beach or let our dog use the water."

Per the watershed district, Steve McComas with Blue Water Science, also known as the "Lake Detective," said he has seen

algal blooms in several metro-area lakes in the past couple of weeks. He said the combination of heavy rain, high wind and warm temperatures have made the problem worse, but that the algal bloom problem "should run its course in a week or two."

*Lori Carlson*