

NEWS RELEASE
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

NEWS RELEASE

Issued jointly from the
Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Public Health
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
UN-L Water Quality Extension Program

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**Health Alert Issued for Iron Horse Trail Lake,
Kirkman's Cove Reservoir and Willow Creek Reservoir**

The state has issued health alerts for toxic blue-green algae at three Nebraska lakes: Iron Horse Trail Lake (Pawnee County), Kirkman's Cove Reservoir (Pawnee County) and Willow Creek Reservoir (Pierce County).

Samples taken earlier this week at all three lakes were above the state's health alert threshold of 20 parts per billion (ppb) of total Microcystins (a toxin released by certain strains of blue-green algae.) Lakes that are on health alert must have two consecutive weeks of readings below 20 ppb before the alert is removed.

Signs are being posted to advise the public to use caution, and the swimming beaches at the lakes will remain closed during the health alert. The public is advised to avoid activities that could involve accidental ingestion of water, and to make sure their pets don't drink from the lake. People can still use the public areas for picnics and other outdoor activities.

The state will continue to conduct weekly sampling at 47 recreational lakes through September. Sampling results for toxic algae and bacteria will be updated every Friday and posted on NDEQ's web site, www.deq.state.ne.us.

(For more information about potential health effects of toxic blue-green algae, what to look for, and steps to avoid exposure, please refer to the attached Fact Sheet.)