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Fort Myers, FL—The Lee County Health Department is adding to its Caloosahatchee River warning that all natural bodies of fresh untreated water where algae is present should be avoided by people, pets and livestock.

“With the continuing drought conditions, it is possible we will see algae blooms in other fresh water bodies within Lee County,” said Charles Walther, director of Environmental Engineering for the Health Department. “Many species of algae produce toxins and many do not. Without a detailed analysis of the type of algae present, it is impossible to tell if there are significant health effects from toxins in the water.”

The Health Department is recommending residents and visitors avoid eating fish from the waters especially, if caught near floating dead fish. The Health Department also recommends avoiding swimming to prevent accidental ingestion of open water, and not allowing pets or livestock to drink from water with algae visible.

Adverse health symptoms reported so far are burning eyes and respiratory conditions.

The Health Department as well as other state agencies will continue to monitor these outbreaks and release further public notices as needed.

For more information or to report new algae blooms in open bodies of water contact the Lee County Health Department at (239) 274-2204.

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