



Public Health
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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Swimming Advisory at Cunningham Falls State Park Beaches Due to Algae Bloom

FREDERICK, MD -- Concentrations of a blue-green algae, called *Microcystis*, have been confirmed by lab samples collected Thursday, September 2, 2021, from Cunningham Falls State Park South Beach. Due to these levels, swimming is not recommended at Cunningham Falls State Park beaches.

Microcystis aeruginosa is a naturally occurring algae in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay and fresh waters. Blooms of blue-green algae may occur in nutrient rich environments and may become harmful when they occur in high concentrations or if they produce toxins. Microcystin can cause gastroenteritis and liver damage.

- Visible signs can be bright green waters, or a surface scum that looks like green paint.
- If contact is unavoidable, simply wash off with fresh water.
- If any skin irritation persists, see a doctor or healthcare provider.
- Keep pets and livestock away from bloom areas. Ingesting small amounts of water from bloom areas should not harm pets. Questions regarding any suspected symptoms in your animals should be directed to your veterinarian.

Frederick County Health Department is working with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to monitor the situation. Water quality testing will continue until levels are below the action levels or until the bloom is no longer visible. More information about harmful algal blooms in Maryland can be found on the [MDE website](#) or the [DNR website](#).

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