

Sunraysia Regional Algal Coordinating Committee

Thursday, 29 November 2012

Precautionary alert for blue-green algae in Murray River at Mildura

The Sunraysia Regional Algal Coordinating Committee has today issued a precautionary warning for blue-green algae for the Murray River from Red Cliffs through to the Mildura Weir.

Sunraysia RACC Chair, Owen Russell said initial routine sampling of the River Murray had identified high counts of potentially toxic blue-green algae at several sites between Red Cliffs and the Mildura Weir.

“Given the extreme heat that we are experiencing in the area, the algal numbers could increase rapidly and for this reason we are advising all water users to be cautious when entering this river stretch and be vigilant of any water showing scums or areas that appear bright green or exhibit a musty or earthy odour.”

Mr Russell said that water used for human consumption should be taken from private rainwater tanks or from the treated town water supplies in towns on both sides of the river.

“Blue-green algae poses a threat to recreational water users such as swimmers and residents are advised to keep animals away from any suspect areas. It’s for this reason that we are asking all river users to be cautious when entering or using the water.” Mr Russell said

“The species of blue-green algae identified are potentially toxic and may cause gastroenteritis in humans if consumed and skin and eye irritations after contact.”

Information updates about blue-green algae blooms and Red Level Warning areas can be obtained from the Regional Algal Coordinating Committee freecall Algal Information Hotline on 1800 999 457 or by visiting www.lmw.vic.gov.au or www.water.nsw.gov.au