

North Coast Regional Algal Coordinating Committee

5 December 2013

Blue-green algal alert for Alummy Creek

Alummy Creek, near Grafton, has recorded high levels of blue-green algae and a red alert is currently in place.

Mr David Basso, Chair of the North Coast Regional Algal Coordinating Committee (RACC), said that there was a potential health risk to people and animals due to the harmful effects of Blue-green algae.

"Alummy Creek has recorded very high levels of blue-green algae and landholders are advised to remove stock from affected sections of the creek," Mr Basso said.

"Domestic pets should also be kept away from the area, especially dogs which are particularly susceptible as they ingest algae by licking their coats."

"People who use the river for recreation are also advised to avoid contact with the affected water while the red alert was in place as it could result in skin rashes, eye and ear irritations."

"Ingesting the water can lead to diarrhoea and other long term health problems. Asthma attacks can also be brought on by contact with blue-green algae."

There is some evidence that small quantities of algal toxins may enter fish flesh when a bloom produces toxins. Any fish caught in water affected by a bloom should be cleaned and washed thoroughly in uncontaminated water and any internal organs disposed of before consumption.

People should not eat mussels, crayfish or the internal organs of fish from red alert areas.

Clarence Valley Council is monitoring the situation very closely with regular sampling and analysis of the affected water and asks that the public heed the warning signs erected by Council.

Council will continue to monitor this bloom and the community will be advised when conditions change.

"The RACC would like to thank the vigilant landholders along the Alummy Creek who have kept an eye on the waterway and reported this algal bloom.

"It is with this assistance that we, as a community, can ensure that the blooms can be effectively managed," said Mr Basso.