

Chautauqua Lake Partnership
May 1, 2017

Ms. Christine Schuyler
Director of Public Health
Chautauqua County Department of Health
7 North Erie Street
Mayville, NY 14757

Mr. Mark Stow
Environmental Health Director
Chautauqua County Department of Health
7 North Erie Street
Mayville, NY 14757

Dear Ms. Schuyler and Mr. Stow:

That Chautauqua Lake Partnership (CLP) is a non-profit corporation dedicated to improvement in the water quality, economic vitality and enjoyment of Chautauqua Lake.

We are very concerned about the presence of harmful blue-green bacteria (cyanophytes) that cause Harmful Algae Blooms (HAB) in the Chautauqua Lake water in which our family members work and play. The County Health Department has tested near shore and shoreline water and accumulation of weed fragments and rotted fragment sludge and found toxins harmful to humans and pets as late in the season as November, 2016. However, the Health Department could not provide the requested guidance on the extent of these harmful agents and an associated "safe zone", a distance from the shoreline in which swimming, tubing and skiing can be done without risk of illness.

We understand this topic has been discussed in recent quarterly meetings of the County Board of Health. We were disappointed to hear that there is currently no reporting by physicians and other medical providers to the Department of Health to capture the extent and severity of illnesses, rashes, etc., resulting from exposure to lake water and its HAB toxins.

We encourage the Health Department to alert area physicians, medical providers and lake users to the dangers and put such reporting procedures in place to capture data on the extent and severity of the problem. With such data and its analysis, potential near- and long-term solutions can be identified, evaluated and implemented.

The CLP will hold a "Lake Rally" at The Village Casino in Bemus Point, May 27, 2017, 9:00-11:00 am. We believe that attendees would appreciate hearing from the Health Department on its understanding of the problem and actions being taken and considered to keep human and pet lake users safe and healthy.

The CLP wishes to be included in future Health Department discussions regarding our issues and concerns. **We ask that you include CLP representation in such discussions. Also, please consider our request for a short Health Department presentation at the upcoming Lake Rally.** Contact Jim Wehrfritz by e-mail (jjwehrfritz@msn.com) or phone (832.319.8112) to make arrangements.

Sincerely,

Jim Cirbus, President
Chautauqua Lake Partnership

cc: Mr. Vince Horrigan, Chautauqua County Executive
Mr. Pierre Chagnon, Chautauqua County Legislator, District 9