

Cyanobacteria Plan Needs Assessment: Monitoring

Includes efforts to understand the status and report on the severity of cyanobacteria blooms.

NHDES Current Activities:

- Reaction-based (response) monitoring program: samples analyzed when someone reports a suspected bloom.
- Bloom severity based on microscopic identification and cell count.
- Binary advisory system tied to EPA and WHO guidance for recreational use.
- Resampling occurs weekly to determine advisory removal.
- Limited toxin testing performed to evaluate for the concentration of cyanotoxins.
- NHDES has a cyanobacteria bloom response protocol for drinking water.

Key Needs:

- A robust monitoring program that includes proactive and reactive methods of bloom detection and response (e.g. regular surveillance and bloom sampling).
- An efficient process for bloom reporting (i.e. google-form reporting).
- A tiered advisory system (i.e. traffic light).
- NHDES cyanobacteria program must increase capacity and redundancy to accommodate increasing need.
- Potential expansion of toxin testing to include additional toxins and to provide a more immediate indication of bloom toxicity.
- Provide tools and direction to organizations interested in volunteer monitoring.
- Development of cyanobacteria monitoring and response plans for surface drinking water supplies.

For each recommendation:

- *Can an immediate change be made to the current NHDES program?*
- *Are additional resources needed to implement the recommendation?*
- *Is legislative action or formal policy change required?*
- *What role(s), if any, would external partners play?*