

Sandy Lake Summary on Blue-green Algae

In the warmer months many lakes in Halifax suffer from blue-green algae (BGA) blooms.

The good news is that at Sandy Lake, Bedford, there have been no confirmed blue-green algae blooms ever, to date, June 23 2023.

However, there are warning signs of lake deterioration: An intense algal bloom, very unpleasant to swimmers, closed the Sandy Lake beach on August 6, 2019. This bloom was tested and found to be associated with diatoms, i.e. it was an “algal bloom”, but not a BGA bloom and not pollen.

In some documents a BGA Warning in 2022 had been announced on the novascotia.ca website and in the local newspapers. This suspected bloom was tested and found to be pollen.

To put this in perspective: BGA blooms have been less common in NS than in many other places because our lakes are generally quite acidic which is not favourable for BGA. However, BGA blooms have been increasing in recent years likely due at least in part to increasing human pollutant inputs such as road salt and phosphorus from detergents, fertilizers and such.

Thank you to our city water staff who work to watch the lakes to keep people safe.

However, we need to take action now to prevent Sandy Lake from slipping into BGA blooms. Citizens can learn more at: <https://sandylake.org/how-to-protect-your-lake-2/>

More housing development in the watershed of the lake will degrade water quality and make BGA blooms more likely.

For more BGA information for Sandy Lake go to: <https://tinyurl.com/36xrw4jj>