Worcester Cyanobacteria Monitoring Collaborative Results 7/18/2026

The WCMC is a group of volunteer community scientists that is developing ways to assess risk of cyanotoxin exposure using fast and low-cost methods. These results are based on methods that are not certified by the Commonwealth of MA but are presented as additional information so that lake users can make informed choices about their contact.

We encourage people to use their best judgement, and "If in doubt, stay out!"

If you or your pet has been exposed to water that may contain cyanotoxins, rinse with tap water immediately. Do not let animals lick their fur. If your pet has ingested scums or water containing cyanobacteria, contact your veterinarian as soon as possible.
CDC - Cyanobacteria Blooms and Your Health

CDC – Preventing Pet and livestock Illnesses Caused by Harmful Cyanobacteria Blooms

Interpreting WCMC Results

The WCMC does not measure cyanotoxins, instead the group uses four parameters to estimate the **risk of cyanotoxin exposure**. These include **phycocyanin concentration**, **particle concentration**, **cyanobacteria density**, and the **cyanobacteria observed**. Each of the results are ranked and given a color to identify severity. The overall risk of exposure at each lake is estimated by reviewing all four parameters together. Results listed as ND (Not Detected) indicate that the result was less than the level that equipment can reliably detect.

Table 1. Legend for interpreting results

Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (RFU)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Relative Cyanobacteria Density
Very Low	ND - 15 - Very Low	0-1000 - Very Low	Very Low
Low	15-20 - Low	1000-5000 - Low	Low
Elevated	20-50 – Elevated	5000-10000 - Elevated	Elevated
High	>50 - High	>10000 - High	High

Table 2. Results from samples collected on 7/18/2026

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Relative Cyanobacteria Density	Cyanobacteria Genera Observed
Bell Pond	Very Low	8 – Very Low	85 – Very Low	Very Low	None
Buffumville Lake	Low	ND – Very Low	785 – Very Low	Low	Microcystis Debris, Snowella
Burncoat Pond	Elevated	98 - High	35218 – High	Low	Microcystis, Aphanizomenon
Cooks Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	662 – Very Low	Low	Dolichospermum
Crystal Pond	Very Low	ND – Very Low	151 – Very Low	Very Low	None
East Lake Waushacum	Low	ND – Very Low	666 – Very Low	Low	Microcystis Debris, Dolichospermum, Snowella
Ecotarium Pond	Very Low	14 – Very Low	179 – Very Low	Very Low	None
Elm Park Pond	High	9992 - High	548161 – High	Elevated	Dolichospermum, Aphanizomenon, Microcystis
Farm Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	172 – Very Low	Low	Dolichospermum, Snowella
Green Hill Park Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	3898 – Low	Elevated	Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Microcystis Debris
Indian Lake Clason Beach	Elevated	15 - Low	2183 – Low	High	Snowella, Woronichinia, Dolichospermum, Aphanizomenon, Microcystis, Microcystis Debris
Indian Lake Morgan Park	Elevated	24 - Elevated	2952 – Low	High	Snowella, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Microcystis, Microcystis Debris, Woronichinia
Jordan Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	439 – Very Low	Low	Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Relative Cyanobacteria Density	Cyanobacteria Genera Observed
Lake Ellie	Elevated	98 - High	24565 – High	Very Low	None
Lake Lashaway	Low	9 – Very Low	297 – Very Low	Low	Dolichospermum, Snowella
Lake Quinsigamond Lake Park	Low	ND – Very Low	692 – Very Low	Elevated	Gomphosphaeria, Dolichospermum, Microcystis Debris
Leeseville Pond	Very Low	ND – Very Low	520 – Very Low	Very Low	None
Little Indian Lake	Low	17 - Low	1795 – Low	Low	Planktolyngbya
Manchaug Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	489 – Very Low	Low	Microcystis Debris, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum
Mossy Pond	Very Low	8 – Very Low	202 – Very Low	Very Low	None
Newton Pond	Low	16 - Low	1745 – Low	Low	Microcystis Debris
Patch Reservoir	High	87 - High	3879 – Low	High	Dolichospermum, Woronichinia

Table 3. Previous Results for Lakes Not Tested this Period

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Cyanobacteria Density	Date Last Sampled
Coes Reservoir	Very low	Not Reported	274 – Very Low	Elevated	6/26/2026
Salisbury Pond	Low	Not Reported	1869 - Low	low	6/26/2026
Stevens Pond	Low	ND – Very Low	678 – Very Low	low	5/16/2026

Data Definitions

Risk of Exposure: Overall risk of exposure to cyanotoxins in the waterbody based on a holistic interpretation of the data collected.

Phycocyanin: Cyanobacteria-specific pigment concentration in the water. The more phycocyanin there is in the water, the more cyanobacteria are present. However, because different kinds of cyanobacteria produce different quantities of phycocyanin, the risk of toxin production is different for the same concentration of phycocyanin when there are different cyanobacteria present.

Particle Concentration: Particles include living and non-living materials and can be a proxy for overall turbidity of the water. High concentrations of particles in the water can be indicative of cyanobacteria blooms but can also be the result of other factors such as non-living debris and sediment. The phycocyanin concentrations and cyanobacteria density help to interpret if particles are due to cyanobacteria or other sources.

Relative Cyanobacteria Density: The ratio of cyanobacteria to other organisms in the sample. Higher densities can indicate elevated risk of exposure to cyanotoxins. Density results do not consider concentration, but in general, systems dominated by cyanobacteria are at higher risk for producing toxins.

Cyanobacteria Observed: Genera of cyanobacteria identified in the sample. Because different cyanobacteria have different levels of phycocyanin, observed cyanobacteria help determine the threshold of phycocyanin that is considered risky.

ND: ND (Not Detected) indicates that the result was less than the level that laboratory equipment can reliably detect.