Worcester Cyanobacteria Monitoring Collaborative Results 10/24/2026

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 10/24/2026

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Relative Cyanobacteria Density	Cyanobacteria Genera Observed
Bell Pond	**Very Low**	ND – Very low	362 – Very Low	Very Low	None
Buffumville Lake	**Very Low**	ND – Very low	1240 – Low	Very Low	None
Coes Reservoir	**High**	73 – High	850 – Very Low	High	Woronichinia, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum
Cooks Pond	**Low**	ND – Very low	390 – Very low	Low	Dolichospermum
East Lake Waushacum	**Low**	11 – Very low	225 – Very low	Low	Microcystis
Ecotarium Pond	**Low**	ND – Very low	251 – Very low	Low	Snowella
Farm Pond	**Low**	9 – Very low	137 – Very low	Low	Aphanocapsa, Dolichospermum
Flint Pond	**Low**	16 – Low	634 – Very low	Elevated	Dolichospermum, Aphanizomenon, Microcystis
Green Hill Park Pond	**Low**	ND – Very low	661 – Very low	Low	Dolichospermum, Microcystis
Indian Lake Clason Beach[1]	**Elevated**	ND – Very low	1371 – Low	High	Planktolyngbya, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Microcystis
Indian Lake Morgan Park	**Elevated**	14 – Very low	2351 – Low	High	Planktolyngbya, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Snowella
Jordan Pond	**Very Low**	8 – Very low	128 – Very low	Very Low	None

[1] State certified external test results at **Indian Lake** indicate that cyanobacteria levels exceed the threshold that is safe for recreation. **The health advisory remains in place.**

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Relative Cyanobacteria Density	Cyanobacteria Genera Observed
Lake Ellie	**Low**	8 – Very low	923 – Very low	Low	Oscillatoria
Lake Lashaway	**Low**	15 – Low	1572 – Low	Elevated	Microcystis, Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum
Lake Quinsigamond Lake Park	**Low**	23 – Elevated	212 – Very low	Very Low	None
Leeseville Pond	**Very Low**	ND – Very low	228 – Very low	Very Low	None
Little Indian Lake	**Elevated**	31 – Elevated	6918 – Elevated	Low	Planktolyngbya, Dolichospermum
Manchaug Pond	**Low**	12 – Very low	230 – Very low	Low	Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Microcystis
Mossy Pond	**Elevated**	20 – Elevated	20904 – High	High	Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum
Newton Pond	**Low**	ND – Very low	247 – Very low	Low	Snowella
Patch Reservoir	**Low**	10 – Very low	1100 – Low	Elevated	Woronichinia, Dolichospermum, Microcystis
Salisbury Pond	**Low**	ND – Very low	1352 – Low	Low	Aphanizomenon, Dolichospermum, Microcystis

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
Burncoat Pond	**High**	707 – High	38898 – High	High	9/26/2026
Crystal	**Very Low**	ND – Very Low	279 – Very Low	Very Low	10/5/2026
Elm Park Pond	**High**	9992 - High	548161 – High	Elevated	7/18/2026

Waterbody	Overall Risk Rating	Phycocyanin Concentration (ug/l)	Particle Concentration (#/ml)	Cyanobacteria Density	Date Last Sampled
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.