

## **PET owners and walkers are being warned about toxic algae found near a popular Barrhead trail.**

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Courtesy Barrhead News

By Pippa Smith

Reporter

Concerns have been raised after a high concentration of blue-green algae – also known as cyanobacteria – was found in water at the town's Dams to Darnley walk.

Blue-green algae blooms may appear as green or greenish-brown scum on the surface of water and can contain toxins that can be harmful for animals if ingested, even in small quantities.

Dogs can swallow this algae by drinking water from an affected waterway or while licking their fur after going for a swim.

Symptoms of exposure can appear within a few minutes or hours, depending on the type of toxin ingested, and commonly include vomiting, diarrhoea, drooling, disorientation, breathing difficulties and seizures.

If left untreated, the toxins can cause liver damage.

People visiting the trail are being warned not to swim, paddle or fish in the reservoir and to be cautious of allowing their dogs to swim or drink there.

A spokesperson for East Renfrewshire Council said: "Algal scum can form on the surface of water due to warmer weather during the summer months.

"It can be harmful to health, so you should not swim, paddle or fish in any of the reservoirs within the Dams to Darnley Park until it clears.

“This advice also applies to dogs.

“Our park rangers and environmental health team will continue to monitor the situation.”

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) has also received a spike in reports of toxic blue-green algae in recent months.

A spokesperson said: “We know that some dogs enjoy nothing better than a paddle while on a walk but we’d urge pet owners to keep their dog on a lead when near water that is confirmed to have toxic algal blooms.”

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