

Water safe for swimming

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Tests indicate no restrictions necessary at Fairport Harbor Park beach

Results from water sample tests taken Friday indicate it is now safe to swim without restrictions at Lake Metroparks Fairport Harbor Park.

Tests taken Monday and Tuesday by the Lake County General Health

District had confirmed the presence of a harmful algal bloom, but that is no longer the case according to tests Friday, said Nancy Niehus, director of environmental health.

The parks system had posted signs Monday at the popular beach that

informed the public of possible blue-green algae contamination.

However, the bloom that can cause toxins harmful to humans and animals is gone for now and that's been verified by laboratory examination, Niehus said.

"We got results (Friday), they only had a very low number as for the standard for the toxin," she said. "The samples taken (Friday) morning verified that the component of the bloom are gone."

Lake Metroparks Interim Execu-

tive Director Paul Palagy said the beach is immediately open without warnings and restrictions, which is especially good news since temperatures are forecasted to be in the mid-90s today.

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"We are very pleased to see the numbers come back much better at Fairport and we will be flying the green flag at the beach as we speak," Palagy said. "We encourage everybody to cool off at the beach this weekend."

At Lake Metroparks Lakefront Lodge in Willowick, warning signs will be posted as the toxin levels in that area were just slightly above the standard, according to the Health District.

Even though public access for swimming there isn't permitted by the lodge, some people climb the fence and head down a dangerous hill to get to the lake, Palagy said.

"We'll exercise an abundance of caution, and we'll post a warning anyway," he said.

Health District officials said the toxin may still be

present in some areas along Lake Erie even if the bloom cannot be seen and they will continue to monitor the situation and address the public as warranted along with posting results on its website, www.leghd.org.

The cause of the bloom

found earlier in the week is unknown and officials aren't sure if it may reappear and/or how long it may persist.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources will conduct any necessary follow up samples from Headlands Beach State Park, the Health District said.