

Poteau River: Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality Issues Harmful Algal Bloom Advisory



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

06/29/2021

The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality ("DEQ") issued a June 25th news release referencing a Harmful Algal Bloom ("HAB") advisory.

The advisory is for the Poteau River between Highway 71 and Highway 80 West.

HABs are overgrowths of algae in water. Such blooms can produce toxins that can cause illness in people and animals. They can occur in warm, fresh, marine or branch water if abundant nutrients are present.

Besides producing dangerous toxins, HABs can also:

- Create dead zones in the water
- Increase treatment costs for drinking water and industry facilities that need clean water

DEQ has previously developed a Harmful Algae Bloom Management Plan ("Plan") to assist organizations, agencies, and the general public in responding to potentially toxic harmful algae blooms. The Plan includes steps for:

- monitoring
- treatment
- communication

DEQ states that test results indicate samples from the referenced area of the Poteau River contain potentially harmful algae (cyanobacteria) exceeding safe recreational levels. As a result, the agency states the public should avoid contact with the river in the affected area.

A copy of the news release can be found [here](#).