Murray and Sunraysia – Algae Alert Status

3 July 2026

This Blue-green algal (BGA) alert report is based on routine monitoring at sites in the Murray & Sunraysia Algae Reporting Area. The sites are monitored by WaterNSW and local water authorities. Satellite imagery may be used to supplement the monitoring data.

Please see Table 1 for all red, amber and green alerts.

Red Alerts

- Lake Menindee Site 19
- Lake Menindee at Sunset Strip
- Lake Menindee Outlet Regulator
- Lake Cawndilla Outlet
- Darling River at Tolarno
- Darling River at Ellerslie

Amber Alerts

- Lake Hume at Heywood's Bay near Bethanga
- Murray River at Cobram
- Murray River at Picnic Point
- Murray River at Murray Downs
- Murray River at Tooleybuc
- Murray River at Euston
- Murray River at Buronga
- Murray River at Merbein
- Murray River at Fort Courage
- Darling River at Wilcannia
- Lake Wetherell Sites 1, 2, 3 & 4
- Lake Tandure Site 8
- Lake Pamamaroo Inlet
- Lake Pamamaroo Outlet
- Lake Copi Hollow
- Darling River Menindee BHWB Pump
- Darling River upstream of Weir 32
- Darling River at Pooncarie
- Darling River at Burtundy
- Darling River at Tapio

Climate Outlooks

For July to September, there is an increased chance of unusually low rainfall across the Murray and Sunraysia regions. Maximum temperatures are very likely (greater than 80% chance) to exceed the average across the Murray regions, and likely to exceed the average in the Lower Darling region. Minimum temperatures are very likely to exceed the average across all regions (Source: Bureau of Meteorology (BoM))

Algal Outlook

The risk of blue-green algal growth is decreasing across most of the regions, with cooler ambient temperatures and shorter daylight hours creating less favourable conditions for growth. Higher risk remains where flow conditions are low and waters are shallow, particularly within the Menindee Lakes system and the Lower Darling River.

Satellite image observations start on page 4 of this report.

Table 1: Combined Murray and Sunraysia Alerts.

Site	Description	Latest Sample Date	Cyanobacteria Total Count (cells/mL)	Cyanobacteria Biovolume (mm3/L)	Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Count (cells/mL)	Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Biovolume (mm3/L)	Current Status (based on Latest Sample)	Previous Status	Cyanobacteria dominant potentially toxic taxa	Cyanobacteria Comments
MURRAY RIVER SYSTEM										
	Corryong Supply - Raw Water Inlet to Corryong TP (NE Water)	15/06/2026	3,000	0.016	0	0.000	No Alert	AMBER		
DLH003	Lake Hume, Ebden	15/06/2026	890	0.024	890	0.024	No Alert	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
DLH001	Lake Hume, Heywoods Bay nr Bethanga	15/06/2026	5,732	0.179	5,527	0.117	AMBER	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
DLH002	Lake Hume, Hume Dam Resort	15/06/2026	2,451	0.021	671	0.018	No Alert	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
DLH004	Lake Hume, Dam Wall	15/06/2026	979	0.027	979	0.027	No Alert	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1000	Murray R. Union Bridge Albury	1/06/2026	1,788	0.043	1,788	0.043	GREEN	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1001	Murray R. Corowa	1/06/2026	12,199	0.030	555	0.013	No Alert	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Yarrawonga Weir (outlet) GMW	2/06/2026	11,934	0.737	5708	0.430	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis*	
N1008	Mulwala Canal Offtake	4/05/2026	19,502	0.103	2,500	0.068	GREEN	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1007	Murray R. @ below Yarrawonga	1/06/2026	15,248	0.364	9,768	0.357	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1051	Murray R. Cobram (Barooga)	1/06/2026	25,990	0.485	8,785	0.324	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Cobram WTP, raw water (GVW)	9/06/2026	7,484	0.214	1842	0.134	GREEN	AMBER	*Microcystis sp*	
N1013	Murray R. Tocumwal	1/06/2026	13,110	0.301	5,164	0.137	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1052	Murray R. Picnic Point	1/06/2026	16,516	0.444	9,575	0.316	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Barmah WTP raw water (GVW)	9/06/2026	6,492	0.242	1654	0.121	GREEN	AMBER	*Microcystis sp*	
N1050	Murray R. Moama (Echuca)	1/06/2026	31,432	0.138	3,541	0.085	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Torrumbarry Weir GMW	1/06/2026	3,764	0.181	1654.000	0.133	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis*	
N1003	Murray R. Barham (Koondrook)	2/06/2026	7,859	0.108	1,712	0.043	GREEN	No Alert	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1054	Murray R. Murray Downs (Swan Hill)	2/06/2026	5,277	0.784	1,699	0.040	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Murray River U/S Woorinen pumps GMW	4/05/2026	64,740	0.300	0	0.000	GREEN	AMBER		
N1055	Murray R. Tooleybuc (Piangil)	2/06/2026	17,807	0.459	1,130	0.027	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1064	Lake Benanee Rec Area	27/05/2026	33,782	0.044	0	0.000	GREEN	AMBER		
N1028	Murray R. Euston (Robinvale)	2/06/2026	25,679	1.187	2,219	0.053	AMBER	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1062	Murray R. Buronga	1/06/2026	72,269	1.197	359	0.019	AMBER	GREEN		Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Merbein (LMW)	25/05/2026	45,604	2.606	3950	0.292	AMBER	AMBER	*Microcystis*	
N1027	414206 - Murray River at Merbein	2/06/2026	81,392	2.267	411	0.009	AMBER	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1063	Murray R. Curlwaa	1/06/2026	75,698	0.280	924	0.028	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1066	Murray R. Fort Courage	1/06/2026	444,803	1.380	274	0.006	AMBER	AMBER	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
	Lock 9 (LMW)	25/05/2026	73,982	2.227	438	0.052	AMBER	AMBER	*Microcystis*	
N1077	Murray R. Lock 8	1/06/2026	164,030	0.230	137	0.017	GREEN	GREEN	*Anabaenopsis sp.*	Potentially toxic
N1078	Lake Victoria Outlet Regulator	1/06/2026	142,731	0.246	0	0.000	GREEN	No Alert		

Table 1: Continued

Site	Description	Latest Sample Date	Cyanobacteria Total Count (cells/mL)	Cyanobacteria Biovolume (mm3/L)	Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Count (cells/mL)	Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Biovolume (mm3/L)	Current Status (based on Latest Sample)	Previous Status	Cyanobacteria dominant potentially toxic taxa	Cyanobacteria Comments
BILLBONG CREEK, EDWARD & WAKOOL RIVERS										
N1020	Billabong Ck. Walbundrie	1/06/2026	479	0.002	0	0.000	No Alert	No Alert		
N1015	Billabong Ck. Jerilderie	1/06/2026	0	0.000	0	0.000	No Alert	No Alert		
N1006	Gulpa Ck. Mathoura	1/06/2026	16,452	0.394	9,394	0.227	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1002	Edward R Deniliquin	1/06/2026	10,912	0.116	3,788	0.107	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1053	Edward R. Old Morago	1/06/2026	25,503	0.217	2,551	0.155	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1005	Edward R. Moulamein	2/06/2026	7,833	0.018	428	0.010	No Alert	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1010	Wakool R. Wakool-Barham Road	2/06/2026	34,303	0.072	0	0.000	GREEN	GREEN		
N1004	Wakool R. @ Stoney Crossing	2/06/2026	13,241	0.024	0	0.000	No Alert	No Alert		
N1009	Wakool R. Kyalite	2/06/2026	29,486	0.097	2,466	0.059	GREEN	GREEN	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
MENINDEE LAKE SYSTEM & LOWER DARLING RIVER										
N1042	Darling River at Wilcannia	2/06/2026	1,087,920	1.098	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1087	Lake Wetherell Site 1	15/06/2026	562,691	0.785	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1088	Lake Wetherell Site 2	15/06/2026	1,174,388	1.701	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1089	Lake Wetherell Site 3	15/06/2026	575,996	1.206	1,694	0.069	AMBER	AMBER	*Radiocystis sp.*	Potentially toxic
N1090	Lake Wetherell Site 4	15/06/2026	784,344	2.231	205	0.026	AMBER	AMBER	*Anabaenopsis sp.*	Potentially toxic
N1091	Lake Tandure Site 8	15/06/2026	694,863	1.637	223	0.028	AMBER	AMBER	*Anabaenopsis sp.*	Potentially toxic
N1092	Lake Pamamaroo Inlet (Site 9)	15/06/2026	591,331	1.089	137	0.017	AMBER	AMBER	*Anabaenopsis sp.*	Potentially toxic
N1093	Lake Pamamaroo Outlet (Site 10)	15/06/2026	897,969	1.334	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1094	Menindee Lakes, Copi Hollow	15/06/2026	615,094	0.936	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1337	Lake Menindee at Sunset Strip	22/06/2026	11,416,747	18.317	0	0.000	RED	RED		
N1130	Lake Menindee Site 19						RED	RED	Site currently inacessible for sampling.	
N1339	Lake Menindee outlet regulator	22/06/2026	19,982,948	30.731	0	0.000	RED	RED		
N1128	Lake Cawndilla Site 34 Outlet	15/06/2026	6,318,216	10.901	1,031	0.058	RED	AMBER	*Raphidiopsis raciborskii*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1095	Darling R. Menindee bhwb pump	16/06/2026	651,653	0.681	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1086	Darling R u/s Weir 32	16/06/2026	3,128,408	4.237	360	0.009	AMBER	AMBER	*Oscillatoriaceae/Microcoleaceae sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1043	Darling R. Tolarno	15/06/2026	20,807,361	21.603	0	0.000	RED	RED		
N1040	Darling R. Pooncarie	15/06/2026	8,841,681	9.847	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		
N1041	Darling R. Burtundy	15/06/2026	6,353,267	7.107	1,151	0.027	AMBER	RED	*Microcystis sp.*	Potentially toxic, taste & odour
N1074	Darling R. Ellerslie	15/06/2026	10,189,264	10.491	0	0.000	RED	AMBER		
N1075	Darling R. Tapio	2/06/2026	1,626,181	1.906	0	0.000	AMBER	AMBER		

Satellite imagery

The key to the approximate total algae (blue green and non-blue green) concentrations using the Custom Algae Script can be found in Table 3. The actual values can potentially vary by a significant margin due to the geology of the waterbody, species of algae, turbidity, aquatic plants, time of day of the image capture, aerosols in the atmosphere, etc. This variability is a result of the nature of satellite imagery being a large-scale remote sensing format and is not function of the technology or the script itself. For this reason, these colours and descriptors are not the official ***"Algae Alert Level"*** *but rather provides information on the* ***potential risk on algae formation.***

Table 3: Observed risk levels based on the estimated photosynthetic activity for Custom Algae Script

Map Colour	Risk Level -	Starting concentration guide range	RACC recreational alert values approx. equivalence
Blue	Very low	<0.05 mm3/L	No Alert
Green	Low	0.05 to 0.5 mm3/L	Green
Yellow	Medium	0.5 to 5.0 mm3/L	Amber
Red	High	5.0 to 20.0 mm3/L	Red
Dark red	Extreme	> 20 mm3/L	Red

Observations about the satellite images

Cloud cover has blocked all recent satellite images across the regions. The latest clear images are provided below for your reference.

Hume Dam (Figure 1): The satellite image from the 5th of June indicates mostly very low phytoplankton activity across the lake, with cloud cover blocking some of the lakes surface.

Menindee Lake System (Figure 2) - The satellite image from the 11th of June, showed mostly low to moderate levels of phytoplankton activity across Lake Wetherell site 4, Lake Menindee, Cawndilla Creek, Lake Cawndilla and Weir 32. Mostly very low levels were indicated at Lakes Tandure, Pamamaroo and Copi Hollow and Lake Wetherell sites 1, 2 and 3.

Murray River at Wentworth (Figure 3) - The satellite image from the 21st of June indicated very low levels of phytoplankton activity in the Murray, while the Darling River showed very low to moderate levels of activity. The Great Darling Anabranch displayed mostly moderate levels of phytoplankton activity.

Lake Victoria (Figure 4) – On the 24th of June, mostly very low phytoplankton activity was observed across the lake, with some increased activity near the lake's inlet and outlet.

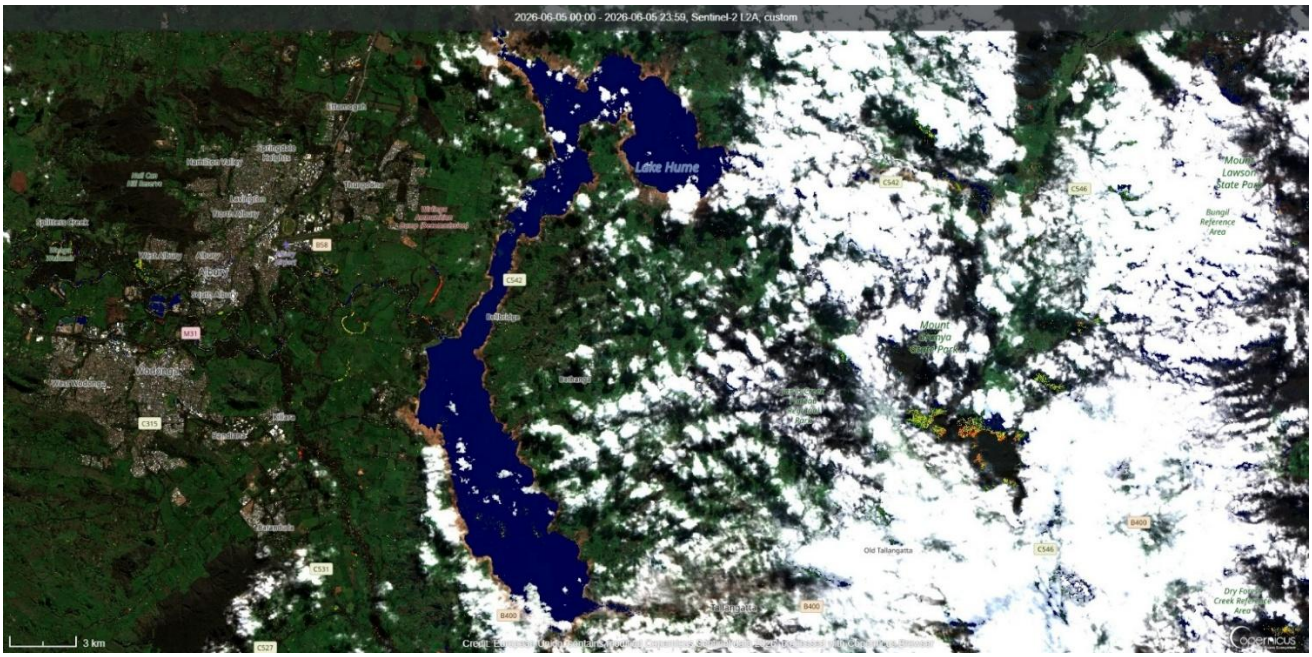

Figure 1: Hume Dam 5/06/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

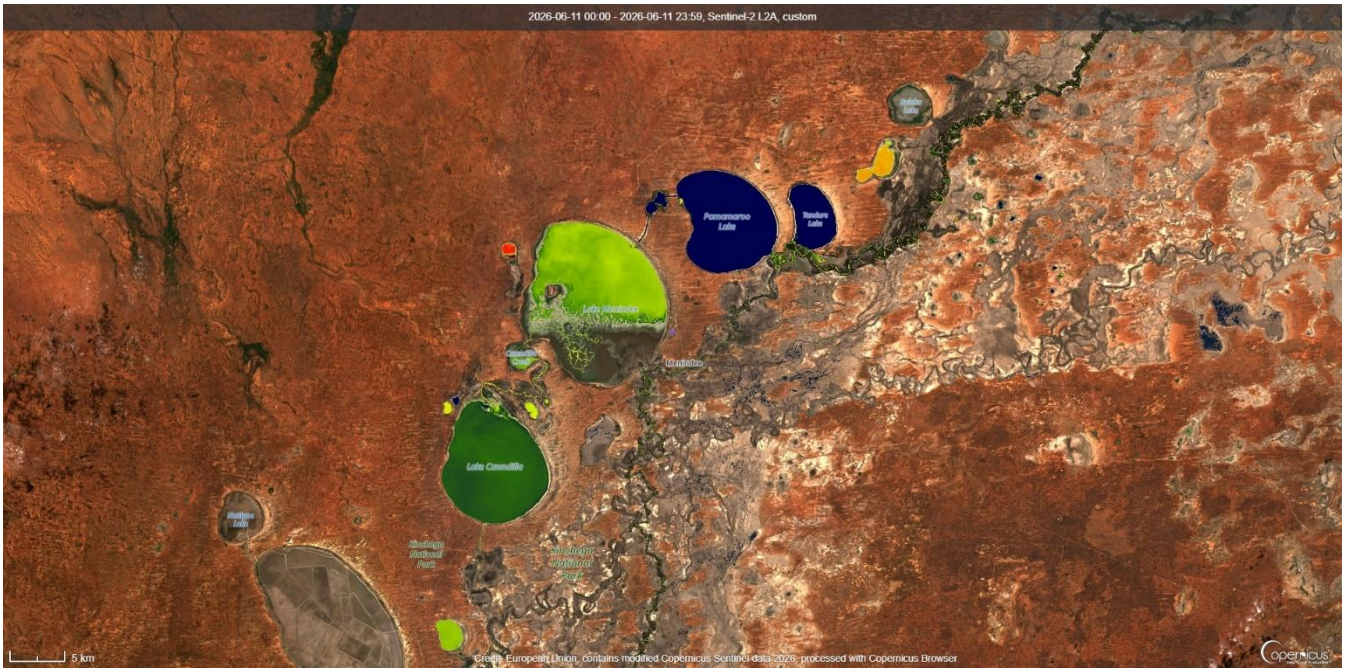

Figure 2: Menindee Lakes 11/06/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW-RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

Figure 3: Murray River near Wentworth, Lower Darling River and Great Darling Anabranch 21/06/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

Figure 4: Lake Victoria 24/06/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

Alert Definitions for Recreational Waters

Alert Definitions as specified in The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) *Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water* 2008.

The interim use of these guidelines is endorsed by the Scientific Subcommittee of the NSW Algal Advisory Group.

RED ALERT
These alert levels represent 'bloom' conditions. Water will appear green or discoloured and clumps or scums could be visible. It can also give off a strong musty or organic odour.
Algae may be toxic to humans and animals. Contact with or use of water from red alert areas should be avoided due to the risk of eye and skin irritation. Drinking untreated or boiled water from these supplies can cause stomach upsets. Alternative water supplies should be sought or activated carbon treatment employed to remove toxins. People should not fish when an algal scum is present. Owners should keep dogs away from high alert areas and provide alternative watering points for stock.

AMBER ALERT
Blue-green algae may be multiplying, and the water may have a green tinge and musty or organic taste and odour. The water should be considered as unsuitable for potable use and alternative supplies or prior treatment of raw water for domestic purposes should be considered. The water may also be unsuitable for stock watering. Generally suitable for water sports, however people are advised to exercise caution in these areas, as blue-green algal concentrations can rise to red alert levels quickly under warm, calm weather conditions.

GREEN ALERT
Blue-green algae occur naturally at low numbers. At these concentrations, algae would not normally be visible, however some species may affect taste and odour of water even at low numbers and does not pose any problems for recreational, stock or household use.

Key to Alerts for Recreational Waters

RED Alert ≥ 50 000 cells/mL toxic *M. aeruginosa* OR biovolume equivalent of ≥4 mm^3/L for the combined total of all cyanobacteria where a known toxin producer is dominant in the total biovolume OR The total biovolume of all cyanobacteria ≥10 mm^3/L OR Cyanobacterial scums are consistently present	• High levels of Blue Green Algae detected • Indicates "bloom" conditions • Toxicity should be presumed • Water will appear green or brownish and may have a strong musty taste and odour • Surface scums could occur • **Extreme care should be exercised, and contact with the water should be avoided** **Action** • Issue Media Release • Water supply authorities to increase filtering with activated carbon as appropriate • Local authority and health authorities to warn the public that the water body is unsuitable for primary contact recreation
AMBER Alert ≥5 000 to <50 000 cells/mL *M. aeruginosa* OR biovolume equivalent of ≥ 0.4 to < 4 mm^3/L for the combined total of all cyanobacteria where known toxin producers are dominant in the total biovolume OR ≥ 0.4 to < 10mm^3/L combined total for all blue-green algae where known toxin producers are not dominant	• Indicates blue-green algae are multiplying • Water may have a green tinge and musty taste and odour **Action** • Water supply authorities to consider filtering with activated carbon • Investigations into the causes of the elevated levels and increased sampling to enable the risks to recreational users to be more accurately assessed.
GREEN Alert > 500 to < 5 000 cells/mL *M. aeruginosa* OR biovolume equivalent of > 0.04 to < 0.4 mm^3/L for the combined total of all cyanobacteria	• Low levels of potentially toxic species detected – suggesting base crop of blue green algae may be on the increase **Action** • Continue/increase routine sampling to measure cyanobacterial levels

Livestock Drinking Water Guidelines Based on ARMCANZ (2000), Orr and Schneider (2006) and WQRA (2010)

This guideline should be used when water is used for livestock drinking water purposes.

- If visual scums are present, then a High alert should be declared. This would be applicable for both farm dams and publicly managed water bodies (streams, rivers, etc). Such advice should also be given to farmers who phone the department seeking information on managing blooms in their dams.
- Where blooms dominated by ***Microcystis aeruginosa*** are present, then the ANZECC/ARMCANZ (2000) guideline of 11,500 cells/mL should be used. Excess of this cell count will constitute a High alert.
- Where blooms dominated by ***Dolichospermum circinale*** are present, then the Orr and Schneider (2006) guideline of 25,000 cells/mL should be used. Excess of this cell count will constitute a High alert.
- **Blooms of blue-green algae other** than *M. aeruginosa* and *D. circinale* are also common in NSW. These can be of either known potentially toxic species, or of species not considered to be toxin producers. When these blooms are present, a total blue-green algal biovolume in excess of 6 mm^3/L will constitute a High alert. (These are based on Very High alert recommendations for raw water sourced for potable human supply published by WQRA (2010), in lieu of there being nothing else available).

Further Information and Contacts

Links to websites of VIC and other agencies
Link to Snowy Valleys Council
Link to North East Water
Link to Goulburn-Murray Water blue-green algal alerts
Link to Goulburn Valley Water blue-green algal information
Link to Lower Murray Water blue-green algal alerts
NSW DPI blue-green-algae information for landholders
Manus Lake, at the Pontoon – Snowy Valley Council

Go to the WaterNSW Algal Website
www.waternsw.com.au/algae **or at WaterInsights (links below):**
Murray regulated river - https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/11904-new-south-wales-murray-regulated-river/updates
Lower-Darling regulated river - https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/updates

Contacts

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