

## Abstract

Harmful **algal** blooms (HABs) are excessive accumulations of microscopic photosynthesizing aquatic organisms (phytoplankton) that produce biotoxins or otherwise adversely affect humans, animals, and ecosystems. HABs occur sporadically and often produce a visible **algal** scum on the water. This report summarizes human health data and water sampling results voluntarily reported to CDC's Waterborne Disease and Outbreak Surveillance System (WBDOS) via the National Outbreak Reporting System (NORS) and the Harmful **Algal Bloom**-Related Illness Surveillance System (HABISS)\* for the years 2009-2010. For 2009-2010, 11 waterborne disease outbreaks associated with **algal** blooms were reported; these HABs all occurred in freshwater lakes. The outbreaks occurred in three states and affected at least 61 persons. Health effects included dermatologic, gastrointestinal, respiratory, and neurologic signs and symptoms. These 11 HAB-associated outbreaks represented 46% of the 24 outbreaks associated with untreated recreational water reported for 2009-2010, and 79% of the 14 freshwater HAB-associated outbreaks that have been reported to CDC since 1978. Clinicians should be aware of the potential for HAB-associated illness among patients with a history of exposure to freshwater.