

## **NYSDOH STATEMENT to WaterFront, Oct. 19, 2018:**

The New York State Department of Health has a long history of working with county health departments and municipal water operators to address concerns about the potential for microcystin caused by harmful algal blooms to impact public water systems.

### Additional Information About State Protections Against Microcystin in Drinking Water:

- The Do Not Drink Order for the Village of Rushville was discontinued Oct. 13 after two consecutive days of samples below the health advisory level of .3 micrograms per liter in their finished drinking water.
- To be clear, the Village of Rushville was the only public water system, using Canandaigua Lake as a source of water, that had microcystin levels exceeding .3 micrograms per liter in their finished drinking water.
- The Department provides all sampling results to municipalities. While EPA's minimum reporting limit (MRL) is 0.3, certified labs can indicate on reports if microcystin is detected above the limit of quantitation but below the MRL.
- If the water supply of a public water system is impacted by a harmful algal bloom, sampling for the algal toxin, microcystin, is conducted on both the raw and finished water to ensure the water systems treatment is effectively removing the toxin.
- If algal toxin is found in the finished drinking water, as was the case in the case of the Village of Rushville, public notification to consumers is required.
- A drinking water advisory is issued if the toxin level is higher than the EPA 10-day drinking water Health Advisory level of 0.3 micrograms per liter which was established for bottle fed infants and children under 6 years old. For individuals not included in that group, EPAs health advisory level is 1.6 micrograms per liter.
- Out of an abundance of caution, the Department recommends all consumers not drink the water if microcystin levels exceed 0.3 micrograms per liter.
- In order for a Do Not Drink Order to be lifted for microcystin detections, sampling must be below the health advisory level for two consecutive days.
- For information about the Do Not Drink Order being lifted for Rushville, please see: [https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2018/2018-10-13\\_rushville\\_drinking\\_water.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2018/2018-10-13_rushville_drinking_water.htm)
- New York State convened the state's first harmful algal bloom summits in March and April of this year to require twelve priority lakes that are vulnerable to HABs, are critical sources of drinking water, and are vital tourism drivers, to develop Action Plans in preparation for the HAB season and to share best practices moving forward.
- For more information about HAB Action Plans, please see: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/113733.html>