

Randy Anhorn

From: Ross Bintner <RBintner@EdinaMN.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, November 6, 2018 7:42 AM
To: Randy Anhorn
Cc: Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson; Chad Millner
Subject: FW: Lake Cornelia toxicity monitoring

Randy,

We request that the WD test Cornelia annually to support water quality and safety goals. See thread below.



Ross Bintner, PE, Engineering Services Manager

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From: Al and Patrice Solyntjes [mailto:asolyntjes@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, November 05, 2018 7:59 PM
To: Ross Bintner; Chad Millner; Scott H. Neal
Cc: Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson; Olson Larry; Gryskiewicz Joe; Ralph Zickert; Lee Susan
Subject: Re: Lake Cornelia toxicity monitoring

Ross, thank you for your quick response. I assume that your response represents the position of Chad and Jessica also. I have added Scott Neal to the note as we feel this is a city management issue, not just an Engineering / Water resources one.

Scott, in a nutshell, the Lake Cornelia Group Directors were shocked to learn that no testing was done at all this past summer for toxic blue-green algae. We feel we have made our position clear to the Engineering department and now want to escalate it to you as City Manager. The details of Engineering position and our position are included below.

Ross,
In your opening paragraph you pose three questions. I suggest that these are questions that you and your team need to answer, not the lakeshore owners. And I want to make clear that our concern is about public safety and is not just about the 41 homes around the lake. It's about the thousands of walkers / event participants of Rosland Park. It's about the perception of public safety and the potential public fall-out over failing to administer any testing for an issue that was shown to exist, through testing, each of the two previous years. And it's about the fact that while plans are being made to improve the water quality, nothing was implemented this year.

The Nine Mile Creek Watershed District also plays a role in this. The following is a quote from the 2017 Nine Mile Creek water quality report (<https://www.ninemilecreek.org/wp-content/uploads/2017-Nine-Mile-Creek-Watershed-District-Water-Quality-Monitoring-Report.pdf>) regarding their recommendations for 2018:

“When algal scum is observed on Lake Cornelia during the summer, algal toxin testing of the scum is recommended to determine whether or not algal toxin levels exceed the public health advisory threshold. If so, the District should alert the City and the public to the high algal toxins in the lake, advising no contact with the water until the lake’s algal toxin levels decline below the public health advisory threshold. “

This recommendation supports our position and that the city should be asking NMCWD why they didn't test this year. We know the lake was treated twice for algae.

Finally, I have added my thoughts on your response, highlighted in yellow, to your note below.

Mr. Neal, please discuss and consider this issue and respond to us within the next week to 10 days. I want to add that while we have different views than Ross and the Engineering department on this, I have been impressed with the

willingness of both Jessica and Ross to openly discuss this matter. We are striving to partner with them and are seeing progress towards that goal.

Regards,

Al Solyntjes
6908 Cornelia Drive

For the Lake Cornelia Group, its' directors and for the general public
Joe Gryskiewicz
Susan Lee
Larry Olson
Ralph Zickert

From: Ross Bintner

Sent: Friday, November 02, 2018 8:28 AM

To: 'Al and Patrice Solyntjes' ; Chad Millner

Cc: Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson ; Olson Larry ; Gryskiewicz Joe ; Ralph Zickert ; Lee Susan

Subject: RE: Lake Cornelia toxicity monitoring

Al and Lake Cornelia Lake Group Directors,

Thank you for your email and advocacy for Lake Cornelia. It was good to see some of you at the Lake Cornelia Neighborhood Association meeting on Monday night!

Here are my thoughts considering your request;

- Would we be spreading our work thin? Would we be as accurate and efficient as our partner?
- The City does not currently have a water quality monitoring program, instead we rely on partners including the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, who have the equipment, skill and scale to make the work efficient. Would be willing to do the work if paid?
- What is our purpose in monitoring? Jessica's October 1 email and summary of her phone conversation with Al, she described several purposes for monitoring that I found informative. Would monitoring provide value?

I am still open to a persuasive argument on this topic, but my current opinion is that acting on this monitoring request would have low value;

- This is weird stuff, first you have to know you have the right type of algae, then you have to wait for it to do something in its lifecycle. Would this third-string reactionary parameter have any influence on the efforts already underway? That isn't the point when we are discussing safety. Positive results would trigger the first two items in Jessica's list: elevate the issue to action (warnings to the general public) and to inform risk.
- There is inherent variability in testing which would make it difficult to rely on for a response that provides public safety. It's our opinion that a positive result should trigger a higher level warning in addition to the general 'when in doubt' caution statement. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) uses this hierarchy of terms (<https://www.mysafetysign.com/ansi-safety-sign-standards>)
- The response to individual tests seems to cause more confusion than changing any actions to support safety. We're unclear what confusion you're talking about but it's not an argument not to test and advise.
- Regardless of a test outcome, our message to exercise caution would remain the same. See point 2 above
- We have an outlet for requested services though the lake and pond policy, but that would mean forming an association and paying for the service, but even then we'd likely recommend other actions for the dollar to get to our shared goal. This is an issue for the general public, not just lakeshore owners. We believe that providing for public safety is the responsibility of the city. Lake Cornelia, both north and south, are public waters.

This is an exciting time for the Lake. You already have commitments from City and WD to plan and do better. I am looking forward to the completion of the UAA and its follow on actions by the WD. We should stay in coordination and

see how we can use the UAA plan as we begin studying Lake Cornelia as the focal geography for the Clean Water Strategy in 2020.



Ross Bintner, PE, Engineering Services Manager

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From: Al and Patrice Solyntjes [mailto:asolyntjes@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 25, 2018 7:44 AM
To: Chad Millner
Cc: Ross Bintner; Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson; Olson Larry; Gryskiewicz Joe; Ralph Zickert; Lee Susan
Subject: Fw: Lake Cornelia toxicity monitoring

Jessica, Ross and Chad,

I am writing this note for the Lake Cornelia Group. After significant discussion and debate, the directors are unanimous in their assumption that blue-green algae toxin testing should have been done this year.

We feel that it was inappropriate not to test the lake for blue green algae toxins in 2018. After 2 years of positive results, testing in 2018 was warranted. The three points that Jessica made in her October 1 e-mail are in fact reasons the lake should have been tested in 2018. We disagree with the conclusion that testing was not warranted.

After researching the Abraxis test strip solutions, we feel that the complexity of the testing protocol makes it impractical for individual homeowner use. We do recognize that the city could use these strips as a preliminary evaluation method, for example before public events where public water exposure is expected.

This is a formal request that the Engineering Department assume responsibility, including budgeting city funds if required, to assure that toxicity testing is completed yearly going forward until such time as the condition of the lake improves enough, as judged by test data, to support discontinuation. We request a written response to this note by November 9, 2 weeks from today.

Regards,

Lake Cornelia Group Directors

From: Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson
Sent: Monday, October 01, 2018 1:06 PM
To: 'Al and Patrice Solyntjes'
Cc: 'Randy Anhorn'; 'Erica Sniegowski'
Subject: Lake Cornelia toxicity monitoring

Al,

Thanks for the call today. This email is to summarize the conversation from my point of view and provide some follow-up information.

Before we ask who and what to monitor, I think the first question is, "Should we monitor?"

I can think of three purposes of monitoring for blue-green algae toxins.

- Data can be used to elevate an issue to action. This is reflected in the ongoing study and implementation recommendations that will be part of the current Use Attainability Analysis effort. The recently adopted Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan also calls out Lake Cornelia as a priority geography for the Clean Water Strategy.
- Data can be used to inform risk. Given the spatial variability, lag time between sampling and results (which can be a week or more), the possibility that blue-green algae can exist without producing toxins, and the reality that destroying algae doesn't mitigate toxins that have already been produced; it seems an effective strategy would be to heed the 'when in doubt, best keep out' message instead of relying on a discrete data point that may be a week old by the time the results are in and communicated. Here's a [link](#) to the communication that went out August 13th to those subscribed to the 'All Lakes and Ponds' list and the Lake Cornelia neighborhood list. I am able to track 'opens' and I see some familiar names.

- Data can be used to establish condition. It would be interesting to determine if interventions at Lake Cornelia make a difference. A few things influence harmful algae blooms; weather, lake residence time (how long it takes water to flush through the system), and nutrient concentration. Only one of these things can we feasibly influence, and that would be the nutrient concentration. It would be interesting to measure water quality again post-implementation to see if interventions made a difference.

I understand that uncertainty about whether blue-green algae are producing toxins or not can be uncomfortable. I understand that safety for your families and pets is a key interest.

I spoke with Larry at the Open Streets on 50th event and mentioned some options for at-home tests. I've copied a resource from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's '[Blue-green algae and harmful algal blooms](#)' [webpage](#). Abraxis also manufactures some test strips.

Although it seems that we have different positions on whether or not monitoring should have happened in 2018, I think we have similar interests; lake health and public safety.

I'm looking forward to the next steps of the Use Attainability Analysis study with residents and Nine Mile Creek Watershed District.

Jess



Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson, CFM, Water Resources Coordinator

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From: Al and Patrice Solyntjes [<mailto:asolyntjes@comcast.net>]

Sent: Sunday, September 30, 2018 1:58 PM

To: Jessica Vanderwerff Wilson

Subject: Phone call - 8:30

Hi Jessica. I'm suggesting 8:30 on Monday for our call.

On behalf of the directors, I want to understand why there was no blue-green algae testing this year. What were the technical, financial, responsibility factors in the decision, who made it, etc.

Thanks in advance!

Al



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