



**Environment and Climate Change
Office of the Minister**

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May 28, 2021

Claudia Chender, MLA Dartmouth South
cchender@gmail.com

Susan LeBlanc, MLA Dartmouth North
sleblancmla@bellaliant.net

Dear MLAs Chender and Leblanc:

Thank you for your letter outlining your concerns and the status of prior requests regarding urban lakes. Please be assured that I am committed to working within the Department's mandate and authority to protect these valued resources.

As you may be aware, in instances where water quality impairments are suspected, the development, funding, and undertaking of responses are often led by local organizations, to which Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change may provide guidance and support upon request. Support may include participation on committees in an advisory capacity and linking committees with academia.

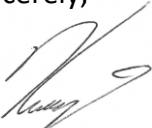
I am informed that Environment and Climate Change staff lead and coordinate communications regarding harmful algal blooms. Once notified of a potential bloom, staff undertake visual inspections for verification. Upon verification, staff will announce confirmed blooms in recreational waters, such as urban lakes, and collaborate with municipalities and public drinking water sources to protect public health by issuing Do Not Use / Do Not Consume Advisories to customers.

I have also come to learn that in July 2020, the Department developed a Response and Communications Plan for blue-green algae bloom events with the Halifax Regional Municipality. This Plan identifies communications and response procedures for notification scenarios and identifies the roles, key personnel, and associated responsibilities of each party, including cross-promotion of all blue-green algae bloom advisory information via social media accounts. This Plan is being updated for the 2021 season. Anyone who sees or suspects the release of sediment or other harmful substances to water is encouraged to report this to the local Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change office, or to contact the department by calling 1-877-936-8476.

Compliance officers follow up on every complaint received.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention, and I will contact your office to arrange a meeting to discuss your proposed actions. Should you have any questions in the mean time, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Kennedy, Water Branch Director, at elizabeth.kennedy@novascotia.ca.

Sincerely,



Keith Irving, MLA
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

c: Elizabeth Kennedy, Environment and Climate Change