

Health Warning – Rangitaiki River

The Medical Officer of Health has issued a health warning advising against any recreational use of the Rangitaiki River from State Highway 30 at Te Teko to the river mouth at Thornton.

Until further notice, people are advised not to paddle, wade, swim, fish, or participate in any recreational activity that might involve significant contact with, or swallowing of, the water. The health warning also includes people keeping their pets (e.g. dogs) and livestock out of the river.

“Preliminary results from an investigation into the death of dog that had been swimming in the river suggest that toxins produced by blue-green algae may have been responsible,” says Toi Te Ora - Public Health, Medical Officer of Health, Dr Jim Miller. “People should NOT have any contact with the water until further notice.” Additional water sampling and monitoring is underway.

Whakatane District Council is in the process of putting up warning signs at places where people would usually have access to the river.

Anyone suffering illness after contact with the Rangitaiki River should go to the hospital Emergency Department. Any illness in pets or livestock after contact with the river should be reported to the Medical Officer of Health.

Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, and Toi Te Ora – Public Health will be monitoring the situation. Toi Te Ora - Public Health will update the public when results from further tests are available.

For further information or comment:

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