



Media Release

Thursday, 27th November, 2008

LAKE TREVALLYN ALGAL BLOOM PUBLIC FORUM

Launceston residents are being encouraged to attend a public information session tonight regarding algal blooms in Lake Trevallyn.

The forum is being hosted by the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program which represents a regional partnership between State and Local Government and the northern Tasmanian natural resource management body, NRM North.

The public information session will be held at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, University of Tasmania, Newnham Campus, from 6pm to 8pm.

Speakers will include representatives from NRM North, the University of Tasmania, the Department of Health and Human Services and Hydro Tasmania.

There will be a question and answer session after the presentations.

NRM North's Knowledge Manager, Andrew Baldwin, said the forum aims to keep the public well informed about the algal bloom situation in Lake Trevallyn.

"The forum will provide information in regards to the nature of the blooms and why they occur, the public health risks associated with the bloom and what management authorities are doing to monitor it and ensure public health and safety." He said.

Mr Baldwin said a monitoring group was established in 2007 by NRM North, Esk Water, West Tamar Council, Meander Valley Council, the Department of Health and Human Services and Hydro Tasmania.

"The aim of the Lake Trevallyn Monitoring Group is to establish a coordinated program to monitor the lake, to identify the key drivers causing the bloom and to raise public awareness and improve access to information." Mr Baldwin said.

Algal blooms have occurred in Lake Trevallyn for the last two years as a result of blue green algae *Anabaena circinalis* outbreaks.

The bloom extended five kilometres upstream from the dam wall and last Summer persisted from December until May this year. Public warnings were issued, swimmers were advised not to use the lake and some sporting events had to be cancelled.

There is a strong likelihood the algal blooms will reoccur this year and in subsequent years if the conditions remain right.

Low water flows, high water temperatures and increased nutrients are attributed to triggering the bloom.

It may cause a number of human and health problems including skin rashes, eye irritation, ear aches and itchiness.



Ends

For more information contact:

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