Uinta County Connection

July 2025

Close up picture of the HCB in the Woodruff Narrows Reservoir on July 2, 2025

In This Issue

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HARMFUL CYANOBACTERIAL BLOOMS (HCBs)…

Know the Risks!

Summer is in full swing but with the temperatures warming up sooner than normal with little spring runoff, it has shown to be an early year for Harmful Cyanobacteria Blooms or HCB's.

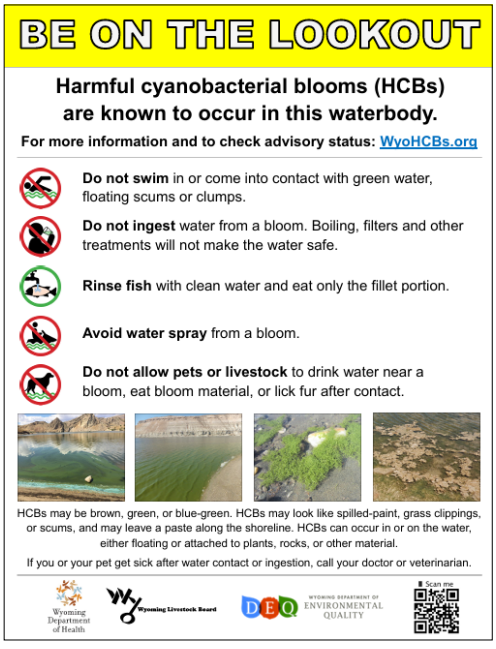
HCBs are dense concentrations of cyanobacteria that pose a health risk to people and animals. Cyanobacteria are commonly referred to as blue-green algae and can form HCBs that produce toxins and other irritants that can be lethal to animals and cause illness in humans. People or animals that have direct contact with the contaminated water by swimming, breathing in aerosols, or swallowing the contaminated water can become sick.

HCBs typically develop in mid to late summer and can occur in flowing and non-flowing waters such as steams, rivers, lakes and reservoirs. HCBs may be green, tan, brown, or blue-green in color. HCBs may float in or on the water and look like spilled paint, grass clippings, clumps, or scums. They may also be attached to aquatic plants, rocks, or other material and look like films, mats, or gelatinous balls.

You cannot tell if a cyanobacterial bloom is toxic by looking at it. The best way to protect yourself, your family, and your pets is to be aware of HCBs in Wyoming waters and stay away from any water with signs of an HCB. Do not let your animals drink, swim or eat near discolored or scummy water, and keep them from licking their fur, eating dead fish or animals found near an HCB, or eating HCB material.

Just days before the 4th of July holiday, a **Bloom Advisory** was issued for Woodruff Narrows Reservoir by the Wyoming Department of Health in cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. A Bloom Advisory is issued for a waterbody when a cyanobacteria bloom is present (as identified by satellite imagery and confirmed on site with photos) and cyanotoxins may be present. A Toxin Advisory is issued for a waterbody when toxin concentrations exceed recreational thresholds.

We have invited Rachel Eyres, the HCB Program Coordinator with the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality to share her expertise and experience with HCBs in Wyoming. She will discuss how to identify HCBs, what the symptoms of exposure are, what to do, how to report them and more.



Please join us to learn more:

Harmful Cyanobacterial Blooms*

Monday, July 28th
6:00 pm

Uinta County Conservation District Office
204 East Sage Street in Lyman

**This will be our Power Hour topic for July! The seminar is free to attend; an RSVP is appreciated. (See the Power Hour flyer on page 2 for more info.)*

UCCD Soil Tests

We can assist you with your garden, lawn, & pasture soil productivity.
Our basic test provides analysis for levels (low, med, high) of available Nitrogen, Phosphorus, & Potassium, as well as pH level (wide range).
The first sample is free; each additional sample is $5.

8' Tire Water Tanks available!

Contact UCCD for more information

Power Hour

Harmful Cyanobacterial Blooms

What HCBs are. What to look for. What to do if you see an HCB. How to protect livestock and pets.

with Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality

Monday, July 28, 2025
6:00 PM

UCCD Office
204 E Sage St, Lyman

RSVP appreciated, Free to attend

To RSVP, call 307-288-0214 or email ksabey.uccd@gmail.com

'Power Hour' held monthly. Place, time, & topic announced at the beginning of each month. Topic suggestions? Let us know! Check our website (www.uintacountycd.com) & follow us on Facebook/Instagram.

Uinta County Conservation District

Treating Alkaline Soils

Here in Uinta County, most of us are dealing with alkaline soil. Alkaline soil typically has a pH above 7.5. We have rarely seen soil here with a pH below that. The problem with alkaline soil is that it can inhibit the uptake of essential nutrients by plants, leading to issues like yellowing leaves and stunted growth. Common causes of alkaline soil include arid conditions, hard water, and the presence of certain minerals. Although planting things that can tolerate alkaline soils is always the best advice, there are some things you can do to lower your soil pH.

Add Sulfur: one of the most effective ways to lower soil pH is by adding elemental sulfur. You can apply 1 to 3 ounces of ground rock sulfur per square yard of soil. This method is slow-acting, but effective over time. For quicker results, consider using aluminum sulfate, which reacts faster but requires a larger amount.

Incorporate Organic Matter: Adding organic materials such as peat moss, compost, or well-rotted manure can help improve soil structure and gradually lower pH levels. Organic matter not only enriches the soil but also enhances its ability to retain moisture and nutrients.

Use Acidifying Fertilizers: If your soils pH is extremely high, consider using acidifying fertilizers that contain sulfur, such as ammonium sulfate. These should be used sparingly and in accordance with the soil test results to avoid over-acidification.

Regular Soil Test: Before making amendments, it's crucial to test your soil to determine its current pH and nutrient levels. This will help you understand how much amendment is needed and track changes over time. The Uinta County Conservation District offers basic soil tests that can help you determine the pH of your soil. The first test is free, and only $5 for each additional test! Contact UCCD for more information.

Patience and Monitoring: After applying amendments, wait several weeks before retesting your soil. Changes in pH take time, and regular monitoring will help you maintain optimal conditions for plant growth.

These treatment methods can help you effectively manage alkaline soil and create a healthier environment for your plants. Regular testing and adjustments will ensure that your garden thrives, even in southwest Wyoming!

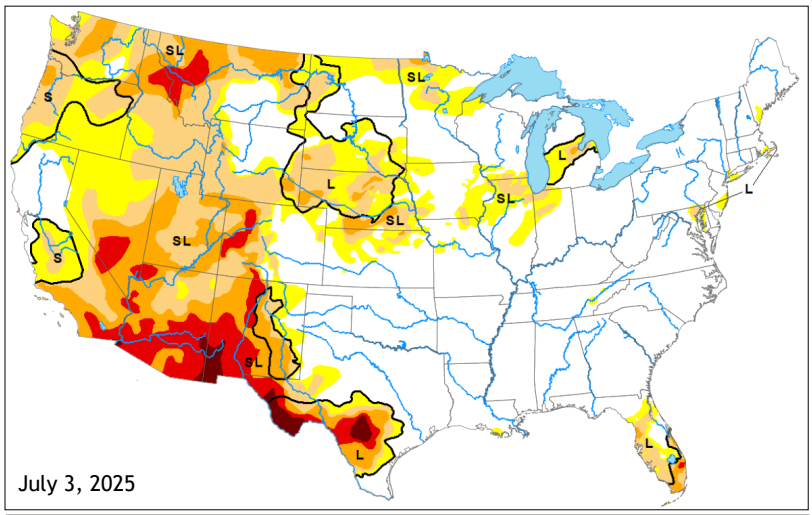
Information for this article was taken from the following website:

Soil Is Too Alkaline: Correcting pH for Healthier Plant Growth - Evergreen Seeds

U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR

Do you know?

The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a map released every Thursday, showing the location and severity of drought across the United States and its territories...



Category	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Description	Normal or wet conditions	Abnormally Dry	Moderate Drought	Severe Drought	Extreme Drought	Exceptional Drought

"The U.S. Drought Monitor has been a team effort since its inception in 1999, produced jointly by the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The author's job is to do something that a computer can't. When the data is pointing in different directions, they make sense out of it...Precipitation plays a major role in the creation of the Drought Monitor, but the map's authors consider many data sources. Some of the numeric inputs include precipitation, streamflow, reservoir levels, temperature and evaporative demand, soil moisture and vegetation health. No single piece of evidence tells the full story, and neither do strictly physical indicators. That's why the USDM isn't a statistical model; it's a blend of these physical indicators with drought impacts, field observations and local insight from a network of more than 450 experts. Using many different types of data and reconciling them with expert interpretation is what makes the USDM unique. We call it a convergence of evidence approach."

BUT, with rising temperatures and low moisture levels, the UNL Drought Monitor may not always reflect what you see and work with daily. How do we fix this? **REPORT WHAT YOU ARE SEEING/EXPERIENCING ON THE FARM AND/OR RANCH!** It is very important that you take an active role in reporting conditions correctly as it directly affects Farm Service Agency's ability to provide drought relief to farmers and ranchers in our area.

You can use the Condition Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) system to report drought-related conditions and impacts within the U.S. and its territories. Your report will become part of the permanent record, appearing immediately on an interactive map visible to the public, including authors of the U.S. Drought Monitor and the media. The following are some tools to help you report what you are seeing!

- This table shows some of the impacts used to determine the level of severity in an area. Reference this table and the impacts you are seeing when you submit your report – it will help the authors determine the correct level of drought. In your report, add as much detail as you can including water regulation, lack of moisture, soil moisture, extreme heat, livestock water levels, forage production, snowpack levels, selling livestock, etc. And, upload photos!

Category	Historically observed impacts
D0	Fishing restrictions are issued
D1	Hay and forage yield is low; producers give supplemental feed to cattle
	Fire danger is elevated; fire and firework restrictions are implemented
	Fewer wildflowers bloom
	Creeks and rivers are low; less irrigation water is available
D2	Pasture conditions poor; overgrazing reported; hay scarce; producers selling cattle; dust increases
	Trees and vegetation are stressed
	Water pressure is low; well levels decline
D3	Snowpack is poor
	Surface water for is inadequate for ranching and farming

DROUGHT continued on page 4...

Uinta County Conservation District

P.O. Box 370, 204 East Sage Street
Lyman, WY 82937
(307) 288-0214

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CHANGE OF SERVICE REQUESTED

Uinta County Conservation District

GARDEN TOUR

August 6th • 6-8 pm

Good to Grow Farms

554 Nacho Rd • Evanston

Follow the signs from 1st Avenue in North Evanston

DROUGHT continued from page 3...

- Impacts considered for each level of severity are summarized in the box to the right. Keep in mind these are not the only symptoms of drought, but serve as a guide when writing a description of what is going on in the field.

Please take the time to fill out a report. You can report more than once, especially as conditions change. Again, it is very important that you take an active role in reporting conditions correctly as it directly affects Farm Service Agency's ability to provide drought relief to farmers and ranchers in our area.

Report now, report often!

To submit a drought report, scan the QR code to the right or got to:
https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx

HOW DRY OR WET IS IT?

Please use what you know about your part of the country and base your observation on what is normal for this time of year. A normal dry season is not the same as drought.

Severely Dry: There is no soil moisture. Ponds, lakes, streams and wells may be nearly empty or dry. Producers may have crop or pasture losses. Mandatory water restrictions may be in place.

Moderately Dry: plants may be brown due to dry conditions. Streams, reservoirs or well water levels may be low. Voluntary water use restrictions may be in place. There may be water shortages. Plants, crops or pastures may be stressed. Soil is dry.

Mildly Dry: Growth may have slowed for plants, crops and pastures. Soil is somewhat dry. Local plants, pastures or crops may not have fully recoveree if conditions are changing from drier to wetter.

Near Normal: What you're seeing is what you expect for this time of year.

Mildly Wet: Local plants, crops or pastures are healthy and lush. Soil is very damp and the ground may be saturated with water. There may be standing water in low areas and ditches. Water bodies may be fuller than normal.

Severely Wet: Water levels in lakes, streams and ponds are well above normal. Standing water covers some areas that are normally dry. Soil is wet and ground is completely saturated. There may be flooding.

The information in the article was taken from the U.S. Drought Monitor Website:
https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

Explore the drought monitor website to see current and historic data specific to Wyoming and Uinta County!