



Water Quality Response and Recovery Report

City of Mattoon | July 2025 Algal Bloom Events

Prepared for: IEPA, IEMA, Coles County Health Department, and Key Stakeholders

City of Mattoon | August 2025

Prepared by:

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In collaboration with the Incident Response Team

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Executive Summary

On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) came to the City of Mattoon's water treatment plant and took samples for testing at the plant and at Lake Paradise, which serves the primary water source for Mattoon. On Thursday, July 10, the City of Mattoon was notified by the IEPA that a harmful algal bloom neurotoxin, specifically microcystin, was found at 0.35 parts per billion (ppb) which is above the 0.3 ppb advisory level for a Do Not Drink order. As a result, the IEPA recommended the City issue a Do Not Drink order for tap water.

At that time, the City reached out to the IEPA, the Coles County Health Department, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to request treatment guidance, public health messaging and support for water distribution. The City mobilized staff, forming an incident response team, and began aggressive treatment in accordance with IEPA's recommendations. Water distribution centers were established at Lytle Park and Arland D. Williams Elementary School, starting on Friday, July 11. The City also made available water delivery service for residents who were homebound or lacked transportation.

The water was tested again on Friday, July 11, and results received on Saturday, July 12 showed that levels remained above the advisory threshold at 0.314 ppb. The City continued treatment per IEPA direction. A third sample was collected on Saturday, July 12, and results returned on Sunday, July 13 showed 0.252 ppb, below the advisory threshold. The City then immediately began flushing municipal water lines. Once the system was flushed, per IEPA recommendation, the Do Not Drink order was lifted at 5:58 p.m. on July 13.

IEPA conducted follow-up testing on Tuesday, July 15, and results later that day showed a sharp increase to 0.385 ppb. In response, the IEPA told the City to reissue the Do Not Drink order. Daily testing resumed on July 16, 17, and 18. Because this was the second water quality incident within the same week, IEPA required two consecutive days of "non-detect" results (below 0.2 ppb) prior to lifting the Do Not Drink order.

Test results were as follows: 0.215 ppb on July 16, 0.058 ppb on July 17, and 0.100 ppb on July 18. With two consecutive non-detect readings, the City lifted the Do Not Drink order on July 18, in accordance with IEPA recommendations. Water delivery and distribution services remained available throughout the duration of the second incident.

The City communicated updates via IPAWS alerts, social media, the City website, and local news outlets.

This report summarizes the sequence of events, documents coordination with public agencies, and identifies gaps, challenges, and recommended improvements in preparation for a formal interagency debriefing.

Incident Response Team and Technical Support

In accordance with the emergency management plan and best practices, the City of Mattoon implemented an incident command structure to coordinate the response to the water quality incident. Throughout the incident, daily internal planning meetings were held at City Hall to review evolving conditions, interpret laboratory data, coordinate public communication, and deploy operational resources.

The City received technical guidance from multiple external experts and partner agencies. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) served as the lead regulatory advisor, providing toxin thresholds, sampling protocols, and recommended public responses and treatment actions. The Coles County Health Department, Coles County Emergency Management Agency, and Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) provided additional support, including review of public health guidance and coordination of emergency alerting systems.

Incident Response Team: City of Mattoon

Kyle Gill	City Manager
Dave Clark	Director of Public Works
Heather McFarland	Water Treatment Plant Superintendent
Doug Homann	Assistant Public Works Director
Alex Benishek	Community Development and Planning Director
Jeff Hilligoss	Fire Chief
Sam Gaines	Chief of Police
Ryan Hurst	Deputy Chief of Police
Dr. Darci Cather	Grant Writer

Technical Support: Regional and State Support

Jim Hilgenberg	Coles County Emergency Management Agency
Gloria Spear	Coles County Health Department
Jared Rowcliffe	Illinois Emergency Management Agency
Matthew Henson	CECOM 9-1-1
Matt Talbert	Illinois EPA
Chris Johnston	Illinois EPA
Matt Maas	Illinois EPA

Jeremy Chervinko	Illinois EPA
Capt. Mike Curry	Curry & Associates Engineers
Dr. Ciera Baird	Aquatic Control

History

The City of Mattoon conducts regular testing at the Water Treatment Plant. While the City continually monitors the water quality, testing for specific harmful algal bloom (HAB) toxins, such as microcystin, can only be performed by the IEPA. The IEPA typically completes sampling and testing on a monthly basis of the raw lake water from Lake Paradise, Lake Mattoon, water treatment plant intake (raw) water, and finished (treated) tap water (or more frequently, as determined by the agency) for various toxins produced by HABs. The City has always followed the IEPA's recommendations regarding the frequency of testing.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Some HABs can produce toxins that are harmful to humans and animals. These toxins can pose challenges to drinking water supplies" (EPA "Harmful Algal Blooms and Drinking Water"). One of these toxins released by HABs is microcystin, a cyanotoxin produced by a kind of cyanobacteria that is commonly called "blue-green algae."

The EPA has published a 10-Day Drinking Water Health Advisory for the cyanobacterial toxin microcystin (EPA Fact Sheet). The microcystin advisory level for children preschool age and younger (under 6 years old), pregnant women and nursing mothers, individuals with pre-existing liver conditions, individuals receiving dialysis treatment, elderly individuals, and immunocompromised persons is 0.3 parts per billion (ppb). The advisory level for children over 6, healthy adults, and pets or livestock is 1.6 ppb (EPA "Harmful Algal Blooms"). The microcystin advisory levels for swimming is under 8.0 microgram per liter (EPA "Recommended Human Health Recreational Ambient Water").

As this report focuses on drinking water, raw lake water numbers (unless otherwise noted) refer specifically to Lake Paradise as it is the primary water source for Mattoon. While Lake Mattoon serves as a contingency water source, no drinking water was pulled from it.

Throughout the water quality incidents described in this report, the City adhered to IEPA health advisory thresholds and followed the agency's guidance, as well as internal emergency management plan procedures, in issuing and lifting Do Not Drink orders.

Timeline of Events

Regular Testing as per IEPA Determination

The IEPA conducted routine HAB neurological toxin testing on Lake Paradise, Lake Mattoon, and the Water Treatment Plant on May 13 and June 10. Table 1 captures the test results received prior, during, and immediately after the incident. Test results were standard and showed non-detectable microcystin levels (under 0.2 ppb) in finished tap water; therefore, no action was recommended or warranted by the IEPA at that time.

June 25, 2025

On June 25, Heather McFarland, Superintendent of the Water Treatment Plant, identified visible signs of an algae bloom at the pump house. This prompted internal Abraxis strip testing of raw lake water, raw plant water, and finished tap water, per the City's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Abraxis strips indicate only whether concentrations are above or below 1.0 ppb. Results showed that finished water was below 1.0 ppb, while raw water was above 1.0 ppb. In response, Superintendent McFarland formally requested additional testing from the IEPA for microcystin toxin levels.

June 26-30, 2025

IEPA staff arrived at the plant on June 26 and collected new samples. Test results were returned on June 30, and showed microcystin levels of raw lake water being over 5, the raw plant water at 3.97 and finished tap water at .224. Although finished water levels were below the 0.3 ppb advisory threshold, IEPA advised the City to increase Powder Activated Carbon (PAC) amounts as a precautionary measure. PAC is a finely ground form of activated carbon, widely used for removing contaminants from liquids and gases through adsorption. It's effective in removing a wide range of organic compounds, including taste and odor-causing compounds, pesticides, and herbicides, as well as some heavy metals. PAC is typically added directly to the water, often in conjunction with other treatment processes like coagulation and flocculation. PAC is an effective method for removing microcystins from water, particularly in drinking water treatment during harmful algal blooms. PAC works by adsorbing these toxins onto its surface, effectively removing them from the water. While there are other effective water treatment methods, the City followed the IEPA's guidance, increasing the PAC levels.

July 1-2, 2025

To monitor treatment effectiveness, the IEPA conducted follow-up sampling on July 1. Test results received on July 2 showed raw plant findings at 3.192 ppb and the finished tap at

0.216 ppb, below the advisory level of 0.3 ppb. Because toxin levels in finished water had decreased and remained below advisory thresholds, the IEPA recommended no changes to current treatment and advised the City to maintain its adjusted carbon feed levels.

July 9, 2025

The IEPA returned for additional sampling on Wednesday, July 9, as part of its continued monitoring plan.

Incident One

July 10, 2025

Test results from the IEPA's July 9 samples were received on Thursday, July 10 and indicated an increase in microcystin toxin levels with the raw Lake Paradise water testing at 9.12 ppb, raw plant water at above 5 ppb, and finished tap water at 0.35 ppb.

As the finished water result exceeded the IEPA's 0.3 ppb advisory level, the agency advised the City to increase carbon dosing and issue a Do Not Drink order. The City quickly convened an incident response team. Furthermore, the City promptly contacted the IEPA, Coles County Health Department, and Coles County Emergency Management Agency for coordinated response support, including treatment, public communication, and emergency water access.

The City completed the IEPA-provided public notice template, and the Coles County Health Department issued the first public Do Not Drink advisory at 5:49 p.m. (Appendix A). The official Do Not Drink order was then released at 7:16 p.m. (Appendix B), and the City posted the order publicly at 7:21 p.m. (Appendix C). Signs were also posted at Lake Paradise and Lake Mattoon to advise of no swimming.

The City requested emergency alert capabilities, but neither the Coles County Health Department nor the City had access to Code Red or an equivalent mass notification system. As a result, initial alerts were disseminated through social media, local media outlets, and official websites.

At 10:30 p.m., the Coles County Health Department posted a supplemental notice addressing the need to conduct more research (Appendix D).

July 11, 2025

On Friday, July 11, the City sought additional clarification from the IEPA to respond to specific residents' concerns about non-ingestion uses of water (e.g., laundry, bathing, dishwashing). However, no new guidance was provided beyond the initial public notice template.

At 11:16 a.m., the City issued a public update confirming that it was “aggressively treating the water” and awaiting further instruction from the IEPA (Appendix E).

Recognizing the need for additional expertise, City staff consulted with officials from other Illinois municipalities who had experienced similar crises, including Bloomington and Vienna. The City was referred to Dr. Ceira Baird, an aquatic ecotoxicologist specializing in harmful algal blooms (HABs), who provided information and resources later incorporated into the City’s Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

By early afternoon, the IEPA had returned to the water plant to collect additional samples. A second update was provided via Facebook with additional guidance on showering, washing dishes, etc. (Appendix F). Meanwhile, City staff coordinated emergency water supply logistics with partners including EMA, Rural King, Walmart, Daryl Gingrich, and others. These efforts secured 24-pack bottled water cases, 5-gallon health-grade buckets, single-gallon jugs, and tanker trucks to support distribution to the public.

At the same time, Matthew Henson, Director of CECOM 9-1-1, contacted City Manager Kyle Gill regarding the potential use of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), following a request from Coles County Emergency Management Agency Director Jim Hilgenberg, with whom the City had been actively coordinating. Upon learning of the availability of IPAWS, the City immediately incorporated the system into its emergency communication strategy, ensuring that future advisories would reach a broader audience through formal alert channels.

At 6:19 p.m., the City publicly announced the opening of water distribution sites and released the first FAQ document (Appendices G and H). This information was also added to the City website and released through IPAWS. The Lytle Park site remained open until 10:00 p.m., operated by local volunteers and City staff.

July 12, 2025

Water distribution continued at Lytle Park (8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.) and began at Williams Elementary School (11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.). The City notified residents of site hours via Facebook at 10:53 a.m. (Appendix I).

Test results from the July 11 samples returned at midday showed finished water microcystin levels of 0.314 ppb, a decrease from the previous day but still above the 0.3 ppb advisory threshold. The Do Not Drink order therefore remained in effect.

An update was posted on Facebook and the City’s website at 1:36 p.m. (Appendix J), and another announcement followed at 9:45 p.m., informing residents that distribution would

be consolidated to Lytle Park only on Sunday due to low demand at Williams and limited Sunday volunteer availability (Appendix K).

July 13, 2025

Water distribution continued at Lytle Park (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.), and water delivery services remained operational. At 11:00 a.m., City staff held an internal planning meeting in anticipation of incoming test results. During this time, they began preparing a press release and finalized a zone-based water line flushing plan to move water through the distribution system.

The IEPA recommended following standard operating procedures (SOPs) and prioritizing flushing in the farthest areas of the system, where stagnant water may have retained higher concentrations of microcystin toxins. The City followed its standard operating procedures, using a sequenced, zone-based approach to move potentially contaminated water out of the system and bring in freshly treated, safe water. Not all hydrants required activation; the flushing strategy focused on efficiently moving and releasing the water rather than blanket flushing.

At 12:30 p.m., results from the July 12 samples showed microcystin levels had fallen to 0.252 ppb, below the advisory threshold of 0.3 ppb. System-wide flushing began immediately and was completed in just over four hours. A second staff meeting was held at 5:45 p.m. at City Hall as flushing operations concluded.

The City issued a final press release (Appendix L) and shared it with external stakeholders, including the Coles County Health Department. An IPAWS mass alert was requested at 6:22 p.m. and deployed at 6:53 p.m. The official all-clear was also posted to the City website and Facebook at 6:45 p.m.

Residents were instructed to flush household water lines, discard ice, and replace water filters. As of July 13, the Do Not Drink order was officially lifted, and no additional restrictions remained in place.

Incident Two

July 15th

On the morning of Tuesday, July 15, IEPA conducted follow-up testing as part of its ongoing monitoring efforts. Unlike previous tests, which typically required a 24-hour turnaround, results were returned in approximately six hours. These results showed a microcystin level of 0.385 ppb in the finished tap water, significantly higher than the advisory level of 0.3 ppb.

Due to the unexpected turnaround time and elevated toxin levels, the City sought clarification from the IEPA regarding testing protocols, laboratory procedures, and potential

anomalies in the data. After consultation, and in accordance with the agency's guidance, the City reissued the Do Not Drink order at 9:12 p.m., notifying the public through Facebook, the official website, and the IPAWS alert system (Appendix M). The IPAWS request was sent to CECOM at 8:54 p.m. Due to unforeseen browser issues, the IPAWS message was delayed and ultimately sent out at 10:04 p.m.

July 16th

The City conducted further sampling and submitted those samples to the IEPA. In response to the reinstated advisory, water distribution resumed at Lytle Park and Williams Elementary School, and the water delivery service was also reactivated.

The City also consulted with Capt. Michael Curry, P.E., of Curry & Associates Engineers, who had been referred by the IEPA. Capt. Curry worked with City staff to modify treatment processes to increase the CT (contact time) value for optimizing microcystin removal using free chlorine residual.

The primary focus was achieving target CT values in Stage 4 filters, with additional CT provided in the Stage 5 Clearwell. At 3:09 p.m., the City issued a public update via Facebook and the website, notifying residents that the Do Not Drink order was expected to remain in place for "the next 3 to 4 days" (Appendix N).

Test results from the morning showed finished tap water levels at 0.215 ppb, which represented a significant drop from the previous day but remained above the 0.2 ppb "non-detect" updated threshold now required by the IEPA. Out of an abundance of caution, and based on agency recommendations, the City maintained the Do Not Drink order.

A second update was shared with the public at 10:00 p.m., reaffirming that water was not yet cleared for consumption (Appendix O).

July 17th

Samples were collected again and submitted for testing by the IEPA. Capt. Curry offered additional short-term recommendations, including optimized use of Stage 4 and Stage 5 treatment systems and the potential application of algaecide to source water. Notice was also provided via Facebook about additional water distribution available at Walmart (Appendix P).

The City also met with representatives from the IEPA and State Senator Chapin Rose to discuss long-term solutions and seek clarity on the revised thresholds. Long-term solutions discussed included modernizing the water treatment facility with ozone treatment technology, algaecide spraying, and installing aeration systems in Lake Paradise and Lake Mattoon.

Test results from July 17 showed microcystin levels at 0.058 ppb, which was well below both the 0.2 ppb non-detect threshold and the 0.3 ppb advisory threshold. However, in accordance with recently updated IEPA guidance, the Do Not Drink order remained in place pending two consecutive non-detect readings. This information was released via Facebook, the official City website, and to news outlets (Appendix Q).

July 18th

Sampling was conducted again and provided to the IEPA. Water distribution and delivery operations continued. At 3:30 p.m., City staff met with the IEPA to review lab results and determine the path forward. The finished tap water sample showed 0.100 ppb, marking the second consecutive day of non-detect levels.

With three consecutive days of results below the advisory level of 0.30 and two consecutive days below the 0.2 ppb non-detect threshold, the IEPA recommended lifting the Do Not Drink order.

The City issued an update via IPAWS, Facebook, and the City website at 4:07 p.m. (Appendix R), confirming the order had been lifted. The City requested the IPAWS alert through CECOM at 4:04 p.m., and the mass alert was issued at 4:06 p.m., demonstrating increased capacity to utilize the IPAWS system more efficiently and effectively for emergency communication. Local media outlets also received this update for public dissemination.

The IEPA provided the City with a list of long-term mitigation options, including:

- Treatment of Lake Mattoon and Lake Paradise using algaecide
- Upgrading the treatment plant to include ozone disinfection
- Installing aeration systems in source water bodies

July 19th

Water distribution continued for a final day at Williams Elementary School from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., providing additional access for residents following the advisory lift.

This marked the official end of emergency distribution operations.

Table 1: Sampling & Results for Lake Paradise and Water Treatment Plant

Date Sampled	Date Received	Agency Testing	Results (parts per billion)	Actions
May 13	May 28	IEPA	Raw Lake - 0.310 Raw Intake - 0.170 Finished Tap - ND	Non-detect at plant. No action needed.
June 10	June 18	IEPA	Raw Lake – 2.14 Raw Intake – 1.68 Finished Tap - 0.114 (ND)	Non-detect at plant. No action needed.
June 25	June 25	City of Mattoon	Internal Abraxis strip test Raw Intake – Between 1.0 and 5.0 Finished Tap - below 1 (Abraxis strip tests only identify samples as above or below 1.0. More detailed results necessitate IEPA testing.)	Algae bloom identified at pump house prompting internal testing and request to IEPA for additional testing.
June 26	June 30	IEPA	Raw Lake – over 5 Raw Intake - 3.97 Finished Tap - 0.224	Turned up powder activated carbon (PAC) per IEPA recommendations.
July 1	July 2	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake - 3.192 Finished Tap - 0.216	No action taken as levels had dropped; maintained carbon levels as recommended previously by IEPA.
INCIDENT ONE				
July 9	July 10	IEPA	Raw Lake (Bloom) – 9.12 Raw Lake – 4.43 Raw Intake – Above 5.0 Finished Tap - 0.35	Turned up carbon. State IEPA recommended DO NOT DRINK order. IEPA provided a template which was modified. Release was sent to the Health Department. Health Department issued ordered at 5:49 p.m.
July 11	July 12	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake - 3.40 Finished Tap - 0.314	Turned up carbon, following IEPA guidance.
July 12	July 13	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake-3.44 Finished Tap - 0.252	Turned up carbon, following IEPA guidance. Lifted the DO NOT DRINK order following the IEPA guidance.

INCIDENT TWO				
July 15	July 15	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 3.4 Finished Tap - 0.381	Resumed the DO NOT DRINK Order following the IEPA recommendation.
July 16 th	July 16 th	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 3.68 Finished Tap - .215	Continued treatment plan.
July 17	July 17	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 3.13 Finished Tap -0 .058 (ND)	Continued treatment plan. Began flushing the lines.
July 18 th	July 18 th	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 3.66 Finished Tap - 0.102 (ND)	Finished flushing the lines. As per IEPA guidance, lifted the DO NOT DRINK Order.
July 21 st	July 21 st	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 3.66 Finished Tap - 0.14 (ND)	Continued established treatment plan.
July 24 th	July 24 th	IEPA	Raw Lake – Not Sampled Raw Intake – 2.26 Finished Tap - 0.038 (ND)	Continued established treatment plan.

Water Distribution

Water was distributed at two main locations throughout the City. Water was sourced and supply chains were established by Alexander Benishek, Community Development and Planning Director. Alexander also set up initial Points of Distribution at Lytle Park and Williams Elementary and worked to form the initial volunteer efforts, subsequently transitioning to supporting on-site volunteer leaders with volunteer needs (ex: food, drinks, tents, etc.) once both sites became operational.

First Incident

During the first incident, Lytle Park was designated as the primary water distribution site, becoming operational on Friday, July 11 with 24-pack bottled water donated by Rural King. Although supplies were available earlier in the day, distribution information was not posted publicly until 6:19 p.m., once a tanker truck and buckets were secured.

Lytle Park remained open through Sunday, July 13, operating from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The site was staffed by volunteers and coordinated by Jacob Fryman, Executive Director of Lytle Park, who also provided park staff to assist with distribution.

Due to strong initial demand and uncertainty surrounding the length of the crisis, for one day, a second distribution site was opened at Williams Elementary School on Saturday, July 12, from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The site closed due to perceived lack of demand during the first incident.

Second Incident

During the second incident, both Lytle Park and Williams remained open from July 16 to July 19. Jacob Fryman continued to coordinate the Lytle Park Point of Distribution and Kat Miller from The Fields Church, coordinated all volunteer efforts at Williams Elementary for the entire duration of the second incident. Kat Miller also developed multiple standard operating procedures should an event similar to this occur for future volunteer groups to utilize.

Over seven days of distribution, the City provided over 80,000 gallons of water. This effort was made possible by generous donations from Rural King, Gingrich Inc, Reed Trucking, Plastipak, Heartland Coca-Cola, Walmart Mattoon, Country Financial, Anheuser-Busch, Jasper County/Newton, IAWC and Neoga, and others along with the many volunteers who served tirelessly throughout the emergency.

Water Delivery

In addition to fixed distribution sites, the City offered door-to-door water delivery for homebound residents and those lacking transportation. Delivery was coordinated by Dr. Darci Cather and made possible by many volunteers. Delivery was available on Saturday, July 13 and Sunday, July 14, and again during the second incident from Wednesday, July 16 through Friday, July 18.

A water request form was posted on the City's website and shared via social media. In total, 511 requests were received, with 452 deliveries completed by City staff and volunteers.

Fifty-nine requests were not fulfilled due to one of the following reasons: duplicate requests, incomplete addresses, requests outside of city limits, or requests received after the cutoff for same-day delivery.

Moreover, the City, in conjunction with Walmart, coordinated and delivered gallons and cases of water to local long-term care facilities. Dr. Cather reached out to long-term care facilities and deliveries were provided based upon their requests. These included Brookstone Estates, Mattoon Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, Odd Fellow-Rebekah

Home, Copper Creek Cottages, Mattoon Towers, Park Tower, Trinity Tower, Palm Gardens, and the Fellowship Center. These distributions are reflected in Table 2 below. Furthermore, Walmart also delivered to local daycare centers.

Table 2: Water Delivery to Long-Term Care Facilities

Facility	7/16/25 Amount Requested	7/16/25 Delivery	7/18/25 Amount Requested	7/18/25 Delivery
Brookstone Estates of Mattoon South	50 gallons & 6 cases -24 pack	Dean Willaredt	N/A	N/A
Brookstone Estates of Mattoon North	50 gallons & 6 cases -24 pack	Dean Willaredt	N/A	N/A
Mattoon Rehabilitation and Health Care Center	100 gallons & 6 cases - 24 pack	Dean Willaredt	N/A	N/A
Odd Fellow-Rebekah Home	25 gallons & 10 cases of 24 pack	Walmart	2 pallets (gallons and 1 bottles)	Walmart
Copper Creek Cottages	30 gallons & 3 cases – 24 pack	Dean Willaredt	N/A	N/A
Mattoon Towers	6 cases - 24 packs 30 gallons	Walmart	N/A	N/A
Park Towers	20 Gallon jugs	Steve/Gary	Left message	N/A
Trinity Towers	10 gallons & 4 cases	Steve/Gary	Left message	N/A
Palm Gardens	24 gallons & 8 cases 24 packs	Steve/Gary	N/A	N/A
Fellowship Center	120 Gallons & 30 cases of 24 packs	Walmart	1 pallet of gallons	Walmart

Summary of Actions Taken

- The City established an incident response team and coordinated with the IEPA, IEMA, Coles County Emergency Management Agency, and Coles County Health Department to respond rapidly to water quality incidents.
- Carbon dosing was increased multiple times per IEPA guidance, and a full system flushing protocol was implemented before lifting advisories.
- The City established two public water distribution sites: Lytle Park and Williams Elementary School.
- A home delivery system was made available for residents without transportation.
- IPAWS emergency alerts, Facebook, the City website, and local media were used to communicate urgent updates.
- The City engaged outside experts, including Capt. Michael Curry, P.E., and Dr. Ceira Baird, to enhance both short- and long-term water safety planning.
- Staff held daily coordination meetings, consulted with other Illinois municipalities, and developed FAQs to address common resident questions.
- The City received significant support from local organizations, volunteers, and businesses, including water and supply donations.
- The City is working with Coles County Emergency Department leaders and the Director of CECOM 9-1-1 to ensure key local emergency management leaders have the authorization to issue an IPAWS mass alert. Prior to this incident, only the Coles County Emergency Management Agency Director had the authorization to issue an alert. The first meeting was held on July 22, 2025, and additional training is scheduled for July 31, 2025.

Current Status

As of July 19, 2025, the City of Mattoon remains off all Do Not Drink advisories. Water samples continue to show non-detectable microcystin levels, and the City is adhering to IEPA guidance on ongoing testing and treatment protocols.

The City is actively collaborating with Capt. Curry and IEPA to assess long-term treatment strategies, including:

- Installation of lake aeration systems
- Upgrading the water treatment plant with ozone technology
- Applying algaecide to Lake Mattoon and Lake Paradise

These recommendations will be explored further as part of the City's post-incident planning and funding strategy.

Lessons Learned and Operational Observations (To Be Added after Debrief)

Next Steps and Recommendations (To Be Added after Debrief)

Conclusion

The July 2025 water quality incidents tested the City of Mattoon's emergency response systems, communication protocols, and operational resilience. In partnership with state and local agencies, community organizations and businesses, and dedicated volunteers, the City responded quickly and transparently to protect public health and restore safe drinking water.

This report reflects the City's commitment to documenting not only what occurred, but also what was learned. By capturing these events, actions, and recommendations, the City aims to strengthen its systems, build public trust, and proactively prepare for future challenges.

The City of Mattoon remains committed to continuous improvement and to safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of its residents through collaboration, investment, and transparency.

References

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Appendix

Appendix A – Coles County Health Department Facebook Post, July 10



Appendix B – Coles County Health Department Facebook Post: DO NOT DRINK Order, July 10


Coles County Health Department
 July 10 at 7:16 PM · 🌐

Date: 7/10/2025

UNSAFE WATER ALERT

City of Mattoon water is possibly contaminated with (Microcystin) a Harmful Algal Bloom

DO NOT DRINK YOUR WATER

Failure to follow this advisory could result in illness.

A **DO NOT DRINK ORDER** is being issued because a harmful algal bloom neurological toxin were found at 0.35 parts per billion level and the advisory level for a DO NOT DRINK order is 0.3 parts per billion. The Coles County Health Department, and City of Mattoon Water Treatment Plant are advising residents of the City of Mattoon Water Treatment Plant to **NOT USE THE TAP WATER FOR DRINKING AND COOKING UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

What should I do?

- **DO NOT DRINK YOUR TAP WATER---USE ONLY BOTTLED WATER.** Bottled water should be used for all drinking (including baby formula and juice), brushing teeth, washing dishes, making ice and food preparation until further notice.
- **DO NOT TRY AND TREAT THE WATER YOURSELF.** Boiling, freezing, filtering, adding chlorine or other disinfectants, or letting water stand will not make the water safe. The Water treatment personnel will be maximizing the treatment for this contaminant.

We will inform you when tests show that the water is safe again.

For more information call:
 Water Utility contact: Water Plant – 217-234-2454
 Local County Health Department: 217-348-0530

This notice is being sent to you by Facility # City of Mattoon, System ID #, IL0290250
 Date Distributed: 7/10/2025


1.1K shares

Appendix C: City of Mattoon Facebook Post - DO NOT DRINK Order, July 10



City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Dalton Roberts · July 10 at 7:21 PM ·

DO NOT DRINK YOUR WATER - City of Mattoon water is possibly contaminated with (Microcystin) a Harmful Algal Bloom.

Full public notice and PDF of Alert is available at link below.

<https://mattoon.illinois.gov/.../unsafe-water-alert-do.../>

[See insights and ads](#)
[Boost post](#)




63

174 comments 193 shares

 Like

 Comment

 Share

Appendix D: Coles County Health Department Facebook Post – Microcystin Questions, July 10



Coles County Health Department
July 10 at 10:30 PM ·

The algae in Mattoon water is Microcystin. Mattoon had a level of .35. The dermal limit (what's safe for skin) is 1.6 for adults and .3 for children. We are still looking for answers - is it safe to wash clothes / hair / bedding. We have not answered those questions due to the conflicting information. Hopefully, tomorrow's test will be better. We can't use Google to find answers, we have to rely on reputable sources that can be docume... [See more](#)





863 shares

 Like

 Share



Coles County Health Department limited who can comment on this post.

Appendix E: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Update, July 11


City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Dalton Roberts · July 11 at 11:16 AM ·

July 11, 2025
11:00 a.m.

The City of Mattoon is currently in communication with IEPA and the Coles County Health Department. We are following their guidance and aggressively treating the water. The City is waiting further sampling and testing from the IEPA.

Once further guidance is provided by the Coles County Health Department and the IEPA, we will share that information with the public.

<https://mattoon.illinois.gov/.../unsafe-water-alert.../>

PDF of 7/10/25 Unsafe Water Alert Can be Found here: <https://mattoon.illinois.gov/.../do-not-drink-order-71025...>

Appendix F: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Update, July 11


City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Dalton Roberts · July 11 at 1:54 PM ·

July 11, 2025
1:30 P.M.

IEPA has been at our water facility site and obtained samples. Results are pending and will be provided by the IEPA by 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

IEPA has advised the following:

"IF A DRINKING WATER ADVISORY IS ISSUED, IS THE TAP WATER SAFE FOR OTHER USES OTHER THAN DRINKING?"

"Given the current scientific understanding, it is unlikely that showering, bathing, washing hands, doing laundry, etc. in tap water with cyanotoxin levels near or below the Health Advisory will be harmful to human health.

However, infants and young children under the age of six should be supervised while bathing and during other tap water-related activities to prevent accidental ingestion of water. You may also accidentally consume water that is used to prepare or wash your food, make beverages or make ice. If a drinking water advisory is issued, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends using alternative water sources for these activities as well as using alternative water sources to make infant formula."

<https://mattoon.illinois.gov/.../unsafe-water-alert.../>

Appendix G: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Water Distribution Update, July 11



City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality is at **Lytle Park and Pool.**

Published by Darci Cather · July 11 at 6:19 PM · Mattoon · 🌐

Water Distribution at Lytle Park

Water pickup is available at Lytle Park (Address: 3298 Cedar Ave, Mattoon). Residents may pick up water at Lytle Park today until 10:00 p.m. and tomorrow from 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. One twenty-four pack of water and one five-gallon bucket will be provided per family per day.

If you are homebound or without transportation, please fill out the Water Assistance Request Form and a team member will be with you shortly.

Water Assistance Request Form: <https://forms.gle/Meqg5XsBZ5UWm7o7A>



Appendix H: City of Mattoon FAQs

FAQs About City of Mattoon Water Quality Situation

Q: What's the issue with our water?

A: On Thursday, July 10th, the City was notified by IEPA that water contained trace amounts of microcystin (micro-sys-tin), a cyanotoxin (sigh-an-o-toxin) produced by a kind of cyanobacteria that is commonly called "blue-green algae." While the City continually monitors the water quality, tests performed by the IEPA happen on a periodic basis and when deemed necessary.

The water tested at a .35 parts per billion level and the advisory level for children pre-school age and younger (under 6 years old), pregnant women and nursing mothers, individuals with pre-existing liver conditions, individuals receiving dialysis treatment, elderly individuals, and individuals with compromised immune systems is .3 parts per billion level. The advisory level for children over 6, adults, and pets and livestock is 1.6 parts per billion of which the water is significantly below. Out of an abundance of precaution, the IEPA issued a DO NOT DRINK ORDER until further sampling and testing can be completed.

Q: How long will the DO NOT DRINK ORDER be in effect?

A: The timeline depends on test results from ongoing sampling. The IEPA is conducting additional testing, with the next results expected by 2:00 p.m. Saturday, July 12th. The City will update residents as soon as new information is available.

Q: How concerned should I be?

A: While a public health advisory has been issued, the issue of concern pertains to children under age 6 and those who are pregnant or nursing, receiving dialysis treatment, or have a compromised immune system, a pre-existing liver condition, or other sensitivity concerns. Further guidance may be found through the [EPA's 2015 Drinking Water Health Advisories for Two Cyanobacterial Toxins](#). The DO NOT DRINK Order provisions provided by the IEPA should be followed.

Q: What is the City doing about it?

A: The City of Mattoon has a water treat plant that uses Powder Activated Carbon (PAC) to remove a wide range of contaminants from the water supply, including taste and odor causing compounds, organic materials, and certain chemicals. EPA has deemed the PAC as particularly effective at adsorbing these substances due to its high surface area, which provides numerous binding particles for pollutants.

Given the findings and IEPA recommendations, we are aggressively treating the water and have adjusted the feed rate on the carbon. IEPA has taken another sample this morning, and results are expected by 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

Furthermore, water will be distributed for drinking/cooking today, **July 11th and tomorrow, July 12th at Lytle Park** (Address: 3298 Cedar Ave, Mattoon, IL 61938).

Q: Is boiling the water safe or recommended?

A: Boiling water contaminated with microcystins may actually increase toxin concentration and should be avoided.

Q: What about using water for making baby formula or mixing medication?

A: You should use only bottled or approved safe water for preparing infant formula, mixing medications, or anything ingested.

Q: Can I wash my food with water?

A: IEPA's DO NOT DRINK ORDER advises not to use the tap water for drinking and cooking until further notice. If food is being prepared for the public, all Coles County Health Department guidelines must still be followed and not use water out of an abundance of caution.

Q: What about washing dishes, utensils and food preparation areas?

A: IEPA's DO NOT DRINK ORDER advises not to use the tap water for washing dishes and food preparation. All food preparation for the public must follow Coles County Health Department guidelines and still not use tap water for food preparation.

Q: What about bathing, showering and brushing my teeth?

A: Cyanotoxins do not easily enter the body through the skin. Showering and bathing with water is safe as long as you avoid swallowing the water. Brushing your teeth with tap water is not advisable per the DO NOT DRINK Order.

Supervise small children to ensure that they do not accidentally swallow the water. Refer to the [EPA's Harmful Algal Blooms and Cyanotoxins Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

Q: What about general cleaning and laundry?

A: Very little water remains on washed surfaces and in laundered fabrics. Because these articles are not placed in the mouth, water can be used for general cleaning and washing of clothing, bedding and linens.

Q: What about my pets?

A: Cyanotoxins can be harmful to animals if they drink tap water contaminated with elevated levels of cyanotoxins. However, water toxin levels fell at .35 significantly below the advisory level for pets and livestock of 1.6. As such, water can be used for care of pets and livestock.

The Harmful Algae Bloom Surveillance (HABS) Program has a brochure on animal health and cyanotoxins available online: [Animal Safety Alert - Blue Green Algae Blooms \(pdf\)](#).

Q: Can I irrigate or water my garden or crops?

A: Water can be used for irrigation as long as precautions are taken to make sure no children drink the irrigation water. Allow food crops to dry completely in sunlight before harvesting and eating it.

Q: Should I change the water filter on my refrigerator?

A: After the DO NOT DRINK order has been lifted, it is advisable to change the filter on your refrigerator.

Q: Where can I receive water if needed?

A: Water pickup is available at Lytle Park. Residents may pick up water at Lytle Park on Friday, July 11th from 5:30-10:00 p.m. and Saturday, July 12th from 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. One twenty-four pack of water and one five-gallon bucket will be provided per family per day.

What if I can't pick up water myself? Is delivery available?

A: Yes. If you are homebound or without transportation, please fill out the [Water Assistance Request Form](#).

Q: What if I want to get involved? Is there a way I can assist?

A: Yes, if you are interested in providing water assistance and volunteering, please complete the [Volunteer Interest Form](#).

Q: Who can I contact with additional questions or concerns?

A: You can call the City of Mattoon at 217-234-2454. For health-related questions, contact the Coles County Health Department at 217-348-0530.

References

DHS. Public Health Division. "Harmful Algae Bloom Surveillance. Animal Safety Alert." <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HealthyEnvironments/Recreation/HarmfulAlgaeBlooms/Documents/HAB-animal-safety.pdf>. July 2010.

EPA. "Harmful Algal Blooms and Cyanotoxins Frequently Asked Questions." https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-11/documents/harmful_algal_blooms_and_cyanotoxins_frequently_asked_questions.pdf.

EPA. Fact Sheet: 2015 Drinking Water Health Advisories for Two Cyanobacterial Toxins. 2015. <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisory-documents-cyanobacterial-toxins>.

Ohio Public Health Department. *Guidance During Drinking Water HAB Advisories*. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/harmful-algal-blooms/habs-guidance-during-advisories>

Appendix I: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Water Distribution Update, July 12

City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Alex Benishek · July 12 at 10:53 AM · 🌐

@followers
Water Distribution at Arland D Williams Elementary (Address: 1709 S 9th St, Mattoon, IL 61938). Residents may pick up water at our new second water distribut... See more

SERVICE TIMES
AS AVAILABLE
7/12/25 = **NOW** to 8pm

FREE

ENTER FROM 12th Street - ONE WAY ONLY!!!!

EXIT

AAA PICK UP HERE

WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1709 S 9th St

12th Street

The image is an aerial map of the area around Williams Elementary School. A red banner at the top left indicates service times from 7/12/25 (now) to 8pm. A red arrow points from 12th Street to the school, labeled 'ENTER FROM 12th Street - ONE WAY ONLY!!!!'. A green box at the bottom left identifies the school as 'WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL' at '1709 S 9th St'. A red arrow points away from the school, labeled 'EXIT'. A white box with a blue bottle icon and the word 'FREE' is also present. A white box with 'AAA PICK UP HERE' is located near the exit arrow. The map shows residential streets and green spaces.

Appendix J: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Water Update, July 12

**City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality**

Published by Darci Cather · July 12 at 1:36 PM ·

...

UPDATE

July 12, 2025

1:00 p.m.

IEPA sampled the water on the morning of Friday, July 11th. Results from that testing obtained today were found to have an algal bloom neurological toxin at .314 parts per billion level, down from .35 parts per billion from our previous testing. The advisory level for a DO NOT DRINK order is .3 parts per billion.

While the levels have significantly decreased because of the treatment activities, the toxin levels are still over the recommended limit and the DO NOT DRINK order will continue.

At this time, the City has taken more samples and are transferring them to the IEPA Springfield laboratory for additional testing. Results are anticipated tomorrow afternoon. The City has been and will continue its aggressive water treatment based upon the IEPA recommendations. Please continue to follow all guidelines provided by the Coles County Health Department as outlined in the DO NOT DRINK order and the FAQs.

The City will continue to provide water to residents until 8:00 p.m. tonight at Lytle Park and Williams Elementary School. Water will be distributed tomorrow at both locations from 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. As of right now, we have twenty-four packs of water and 1-gallon jugs. Residents may bring their own bucket or container for refill AT LYTLE PARK ONLY, 5 Gallon Maximum, and all containers must have a lid.

Residents with mobility or transportation limitations may make a request for water delivery through the Water Request Form (see comments).

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Appendix K: City of Mattoon Facebook Post Water Distribution Update, July 12


City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality is at **Lytle Park and Pool**.
 Published by Alex Benishek · July 12 at 9:45 PM · Mattoon ·

WATER DISTRIBUTION UPDATE

As of 7/13/25, only one water distribution center will be open. It will be the Lytle Park Point of Distribution. Water will be available from 8am to 8pm.

The center that was previously operated today at William's Elementary was a pilot distribution center to test demand.

Coles County EMA and City Leadership determined that there was not sufficient demand to justify a second point of distribution.

If need increases we will revisit this location.

Again, until further notice Lytle Park will be the main water distribution center.




PARK
Lytle Park and Pool

Appendix L: City of Mattoon Press Release DO NOT DRINK Order LIFTED, July 13

July 13, 2025

5:58 p.m.

WATER SAFETY UPDATE – DO NOT DRINK ORDER LIFTED

On the morning of Saturday, July 12, the City of Mattoon, in coordination with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), conducted water quality sampling. Test results received today show a decreased level of algal bloom neurotoxin at 0.252 parts per billion, which is now *below* the IEPA's Do Not Drink advisory threshold of 0.3 parts per billion.

Following IEPA recommendations, the City has completed flushing of the municipal water system. As a result, the Do Not Drink order is now LIFTED.

Before using tap water:

- Flush all cold-water lines for 5–10 minutes.
- Discard all ice and replace water filters.
- Flush hot water lines separately for 5–10 minutes.

Appendix M: City of Mattoon Press Release DO NOT DRINK Order REIUSSUED, – July 15



City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality

Published by Alex Benishek · July 15 at 9:12 PM · 🌐

...

Date: 7/15/2025

UNSAFE WATER ALERT

City of Mattoon water is again possibly contaminated with (Microcystin) a Harmful Algal Bloom

DO NOT DRINK YOUR WATER

Failure to follow this advisory could result in illness.

A DO NOT DRINK ORDER is being reissued because a harmful algal bloom neurological toxin was found at 0.38 parts per billion level and the advisory level for a DO NOT DRINK order is 0.3 parts per billion. The Coles County Health Department, and City of Mattoon Water Treatment Plant are advising residents of the City of Mattoon Water Treatment Plant to NOT USE THE TAP WATER FOR DRINKING AND COOKING UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

What should I do?

DO NOT DRINK YOUR TAP WATER---USE ONLY BOTTLED WATER. Bottled water should be used for all drinking (including baby formula and juice), brushing teeth, washing dishes, making ice and food preparation until further notice.

DO NOT TRY AND TREAT THE WATER YOURSELF. Boiling, freezing, filtering, adding chlorine or other disinfectants, or letting water stand will not make the water safe. The Water Treatment personnel will be maximizing the treatment for this contaminant.

We are waiting for further instruction from the IEPA. We will inform you when tests show that the water is safe once again.

Timeline: We are testing daily and we are unsure when this will be recended.

For more information call:

Water Utility contact: Water Plant – 217-234-2454

Local County Health Department: 217-348-0530

This notice is being sent to you by Facility # City of Mattoon, System ID #. IL0290250 Date Distributed: 7/15/2025

Please share this information with all other people who receive this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand. Last updated — 7/15/2025

Appendix N: City of Mattoon Update DO NOT DRINK Order Continued, July 16



City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
 Published by Darci Cather · July 16 at 3:09 PM ·

CITY OF MATTOON WATER UPDATE

Please be advised that current water conditions are expected to continue for the next 3 to 4 days. Per Illinois EPA guidance, two consecutive safe test results are required before lifting the advisory.

WATER DISTRIBUTION AVAILABLE

Free bottled water, filled 1-gallon bottles, and empty 1-gallon bottles that may be filled on site are available for pickup at the following locations:

- Lytle Park (Address: 3298 Cedar Ave, Mattoon)
- Arland D. Williams Elementary School (Address: 1709 S 9th St, Mattoon, IL 61938)

Distribution sites are open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Residents are encouraged to bring the containers previously provided to them with the lid or their own containers. Limit 5 gallons with lid.

To ensure that water is distributed fairly and reaches those who need it most, please do not visit both the Williams Elementary & Lytle Park locations distribution sites on the same day.

Doing so takes limited resources away from other families and individuals who are also in urgent need. We appreciate your cooperation and community spirit during this time.

If you are homebound or without transportation, please fill out the Water Assistance Request Form and a team member will be with you shortly. Please complete one request per household.

Water Assistance Request Form: <https://forms.gle/Meqq5XsBZ5UWm7o7A>

Please continue to monitor the City's website for updates.

CITY OF MATTOON WATER UPDATE

<https://mattoon.illinois.gov/.../water-update-july-16-2025/>

Water Assistance Request

If you or someone you know needs water assistance and are unable to go to a water distribution location, please complete this form. A team member will follow up as soon as possible. All information is kept confidential and used only to coordinate help.

Full Name

Your answer

Home Address

Your answer

Phone Number

Appendix O: City of Mattoon Update with Testing Results, July 16


City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Alex Benishek · July 16 at 10:00 PM · 🌐
...

July 16, 2025
10:00 p.m.

CITY OF MATTOON WATER UPDATE

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) sampled the water on Wednesday, July 16th. Results obtained today show the presence of an algal bloom neurological toxin at 0.215 parts per billion, a decrease from 0.38 parts per billion in previous testing. The advisory threshold for a Do Not Drink order is 0.3 parts per billion.

While this downward trend is encouraging, the City will continue to conduct regular sampling and testing before lifting the Do Not Drink order. The next test is scheduled for Thursday, July 17th, and the DO NOT DRINK order will remain in place until the City receives at least two consecutive safe test results, as recommended by IEPA at this point.

The City will continue to provide free water to residents today at Lytle Park and Arland D. Williams Elementary School until 8:00 p.m. Water distribution will resume tomorrow, Thursday, at both locations from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. 24-packs of bottled water and 1-gallon jugs will be provided as available. The City is working diligently with multiple organizations to source additional 24 packs of water; tankers will continue to be provided without lapse barring refilling periods.

Residents may bring their own buckets or containers (maximum 5 gallons) for refill. All containers must have a secure lid.

If you are homebound or have limited mobility or transportation, please complete the Water Assistance Request Form to request delivery service in the comment section.

We appreciate your continued patience, cooperation, and community spirit as we work to resolve this issue.

Appendix P: City of Mattoon Water Distribution at Walmart, July 17


City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality
Published by Darci Cather · July 17 at 10:11 AM · 🌐
...

WATER DISTRIBUTION AVAILABLE AT WALMART

Walmart (101 Dettro Dr, Mattoon, IL 61938) is distributing water today until 7:00 p.m. in the northwest corner of the parking lot.

Water will also be available tomorrow from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., or while supplies last.

Residents may also bring plastic bottles for recycling at the distribution site.

Appendix Q: City of Mattoon Update: DO NOT DRINK Order Continues, July 17



CITY OF MATTOON WATER UPDATE: DO NOT DRINK ORDER CONTINUES

July 17, 2025
5:30 p.m.

CITY OF MATTOON WATER UPDATE

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) sampled the water on Thursday, July 17. Results obtained today show the presence of an algal bloom neurological toxin at **0.058 parts per billion**, a significant decrease from 0.215 parts per billion in yesterday's test. **Today's results qualify as a non-detect reading.**

Out an abundance of caution, the IEPA is recommending the City of Mattoon continues the DO NOT DRINK Order at this time. The next round of water testing is scheduled for Friday, July 18.

With the approval of the IEPA, the City of Mattoon began a controlled flush of the water system and will continue through tomorrow.

The City of Mattoon will continue to provide free water to residents at Lytle Park and Arland D. Williams Elementary School from 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Residents may bring their own buckets or containers (maximum 5 gallons) for refill. All containers must have a secure lid.

We appreciate your continued patience, cooperation, and community spirit as we work to resolve this issue.

Appendix R: City of Mattoon Press Release: DO NOT DRINK Lifted, July 18



City of Mattoon, Illinois - Municipality

Published by Darci Cather · July 18 at 4:07 PM ·

...

DO NOT DRINK ORDER IS LIFTED

FOR CITY OF MATTOON
EVERYONE MAY DRINK THE TAP WATER – July 18, 2025

WHY IS THE ADVISORY LIFTED?

- The DO NOT DRINK Order that was issued on July 15, [2025](#) for the City of Mattoon has now been **LIFTED**.
- Samples collected on July 15th showed harmful algal bloom neurological toxin in the drinking water at .385 parts per billion (ppb) which is *above* the EPA recommended advisory levels of .30 ppb.
- Samples collected on July 16th showed harmful algal bloom neurological toxin in the drinking water at .215 ppb which is *under* the EPA recommended advisory levels of .30 ppb.
- Samples collected on July 17th showed harmful algal bloom neurological toxin in the drinking water at .058 ppb which is considered non-detect *under* the EPA recommended advisory levels of .30 ppb.
- Samples collected on July 18th showed harmful algal bloom neurological toxin in the drinking water at .10 ppb which is considered non-detect *under* the EPA recommended advisory levels of .30 ppb.
- With three consecutive days of results *under* the EPA's advisory levels of .30 ppb, the **DO NOT DRINK Order has been LIFTED**.

WHAT ACTIONS DID THE CITY OF MATTOON TAKE TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM?

The City of Mattoon took the following actions to reduce harmful algal bloom neurological toxin levels:

- Met with a consultant who recommended both short-term and long-term solutions.
- Increased [the Powder-Activated Carbon \(PAC\)](#).
- Increased chlorine feed rates.
- Performed directional flushing of distribution system based on IEPA recommendations.
- Developing long-term treatment options, including lake and plant treatment.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- **Everyone may resume using [the tap](#) water for all uses.**
- Flush all cold-water lines for 5–10 minutes.
- Flush hot water lines separately for 5–10 minutes.
- IEPA recommends discarding all ice and replacing water filters.

Water distribution will remain open through Saturday, July 18th at both Lytle Park and Arland D. Williams Elementary School from 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.