

CVSS

Sailing for People with Disabilities

Health and Safety Policy

Linked CVSS documents:

[Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy,](#)

[Positive Behaviour Policy](#)

[Procedures for Use of Pontoons, hoists and Slider Boards](#)

[Risk Assessments](#)

Health and Safety Policy Statement

CVSS is committed to managing safety by:

- Providing adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities
- Consulting with our volunteers /members /participants on matters affecting their health and safety
- Providing and maintaining safe equipment
- Ensuring safe handling and use of substances
- Providing information, instruction and supervision for volunteers/members/participants
- Ensuring all volunteers are competent to do their tasks, and giving them adequate training
- Preventing accidents and ill health
- Maintaining safe and healthy conditions

Breaches of this Policy threatens the safety of participants.

The document below gives the general guidelines in place at CVSS. From time to time additional/modified procedures may be required to deal with situational issues and ensure safety.

1. The Entry Gate and Road

If you do not need to drive to the clubhouse park your vehicle in the main car park.

The Entry gate to the Aquadrome is there to stop unauthorised vehicles. Please follow these guidelines for using a key fob to activate the gate.

- Wave fob in front of key pad. The light will start flashing and the gate will slide open.
- Do not try to follow another vehicle through when they have opened the gates.
- On leaving the site drive to white line and light will start flashing and gate will slide open.

(FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON OBTAINING GATE KEYS AND USE OF GATE SEE CVSS DOCUMENT “Guidance on obtaining CVSS Key Fobs for the Aquadrome Gate”)

SPEED LIMIT AND SAFETY

CVSS is based in a public park. Our access road is a path. Please obey the 5mph speed limit, use hazard-warning lights and treat fellow park users with courtesy and patience

2. Registering your arrival at CVSS

CVSS requires that groups arriving on the BLYM site for CVSS activities to make their presence known to the CVSS Shore Officer (ShO) on duty. This allows the ShO to be aware of who is present on site in the event of an emergency.

It is the responsibility of the “sailing group leader” (SGL) to monitor the group and ensure that each member is equipped with a buoyancy aid which must be worn with the help and support of CVSS. (See section on buoyancy aids/life jackets below.)

On a first visit the SGL must make contact with the Sh O for guidance but must not allow independently mobile sailors to approach the water before buoyancy aids are fitted. The correct fitting of aids will be explained on this visit.

If a sailor attends with a parent or carer he/she is responsible for equipping the sailor with a buoyancy aid, with the support of CVSS.

An independent sailor must also follow the rules concerning buoyancy aids.

3. Personal Hygiene

It is important that sailors, carers and volunteers WASH THEIR HANDS after sailing and before eating because of the risk of

water- borne and other infections. It is the responsibility of the carers of sailors to ensure this is carried out

4. **Accident, Emergency & Fire Procedures** **CVSS SERIOUS ACCIDENT/INJURY/HEALTH EVENT** **ACTION PLAN**

If someone with CVSS is taken ill or hurt on land talk to them/their parents/carers and establish how ill they feel, if it is part of an on-going condition etc. If they look really ill or they say they are then-

1. If you are not the shore officer or leader quickly pass this information to one of these people
2. Leader/Shore Officer should make a quick (though reasoned) decision with the sailor and the carers (if appropriate) if emergency services are required.
3. If the decision is “yes,” decide who from CVSS is now going to be responsible for handling the management of the situation.
4. Use the BLYM landline **01923 772015** to telephone the emergency services (ES) Tel no 999. The handset can be taken outside the building with you if necessary (the base unit has a long range). The ES will want to know which service you require, the telephone number you are ringing from, the location, the nature of the problem

LOCATION OF CVSS

“CVSS IS AT BURY LAKE YOUNG MARINERS THE SAILING CLUB IN THE AQUADROME, RICKMANSWORTH, POSTCODE WD3 1NB.

TEL: 01923 772015

(you may also give CVSS mobile no 07756 442421 if you have that phone to hand, or that of your own mobile)

DIRECTIONS: FROM A404 GOING NORTH FROM BATCHWORTH HILL TAKE FILTER LEFT ONTO HAREFIELD RD, PASS TESCO, TURN NEXT RIGHT INTO FROGMORE ROAD AND INTO THE AQUADROME, CROSS THE BRIDGE OVER THE CANAL. AS THE ROAD APPROACHES THE CAR-PARK YOU WILL SEE A ROAD WHICH REQUIRES A RIGHT TURN THROUGH A METAL GATE, MAKE THAT TURN. GO THROUGH THE GATE AND PROCEED DOWN THE ROAD. BE AWARE THIS ROAD IS A FOOTPATH. DRIVE TO THE END OF THE ROAD YOU WILL SEE THE SAILING CLUB.”

TAKE THE BLYM PHONE WITH YOU OR ASSIGN SOMEONE TO ANSWER IT IF IT RINGS

5. Send someone to go to the gate with a key to either open the gate or, if it is open, direct the ES. If you are alone enlist a member of another group at the base or a member of the public to help OR warn the ES you need the police to come to collect a key from you if you are unable to leave the victim

6. MEANWHILE ..

If the victim is in/on the water ensure their safe return to the jetty. (See Retrieval of Man over Board procedure if this is appropriate.)

If the person is in a boat and they /you/the carer have any doubts DO NOT remove them from the boat, await the arrival of the ES (e.g. the victim is unconscious/ dizzy/fitting or may have had a stroke or heart attack).

If the person is not breathing and you can get them out of the boat safely you should do so and apply CPR

IF THE SAILOR IS USUALLY HOISTED TAKE THE BOAT TO THE HOIST so that it can be used if ES decide it is required.

Consider taking any boat with an immobile, ill sailor to the hoist point at a CVSS jetty if the emergency services are not already present. Discuss this option with them if they are.

7. Ensure appropriate first aid is given

INCLUDING USING THE DEFIBRILATOR IF THIS IS INDICATED. Defibrillator is located in the clubhouse in the cabinet. Follow the "voice" instructions

8. Ensure all CVSS on site are aware there is an ongoing incident

9. Liase with BLYM warden/ other groups on site; be clear what help/support you need

10. Make appropriate arrangements for other CVSS sailors/groups on site- this may include clearing the water if the incident/accident requires more CVSS personnel to deal with it than are available if normal sailing continues

11. Ensure any group leaders/family /carers of the incident/accident victim who are on site are informed/involved in decision-making

12. Continue to support the victim.

13. When the ES arrive be prepared to give a brief description of events. If a carer/parent is present they should be able to provide a health history or the sailor may be able to do so
14. The ES will decide on treatment/how to remove the sailor from the boat but be prepared to give brief information about our resources, hoist, slider boards etc. Do not assume they understand our boats explain briefly about the keel, slipway etc
15. Make arrangements to ensure that others accompanying the victim are cared for e.g. if there are other children in the group ensure they are supervised but kept out of the way, provide them with drinks etc. If an elderly/vulnerable person is accompanying the victim watch them for signs of shock
16. If the sailor needs to be taken to hospital and is alone, or the carer is unable to accompany the sailor, appoint a CVSS volunteer to accompany but make arrangements about how they will get home- CVSS will pay for taxi etc
17. If the sailor is alone try to find out who should be contacted and make contacts
18. Give the victim's carers a CVSS contact number (the group leader's or shore officer's number if they can be available) and/or 1 of the trustees tel nos for contacts later. Give the CVSS mobile number as well if sailing is continuing for some time
19. Complete Incident or Accident form ASAP, include time/date and details. If forms are unavailable write all information down. BLYM will need a copy of this material, as will the CVSS Trustees
20. Remind CVSS present of confidentiality rules
21. Inform CVSS Trustee for Health and Safety/ Chair as soon as is practicable SEE CVSS "Incident Procedure"

Accident procedure – Minor Accident

- Carry out first Aid to the best of your knowledge and experience
- Remember to wear gloves
- Do not administer any pills or lotions
- At the first available opportunity fill in the Accident Book
- Advise victim to go to Dr /Minor injuries clinic at Mount Vernon Hospital on A404 at Northwood (top of Batchworth Hill) HA62RN. Open every day 9-8pm 01923 844201. (Advise to tel first to confirm it is open)

FIRE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

GROUPS

Each SGL and sailing member has acknowledged receipt of the safety document at the beginning of the sailing season (sent with membership form)

Whilst CVSS will attempt to brief groups at the beginning of the season it is the responsibility of the person identified to CVSS as SGL to ensure that those acting in that capacity throughout the season are made aware of the procedures and that staff/carers accompanying groups are briefed. CVSS cannot brief at the beginning of each visit.

INDIVIDUAL SAILORS

Each sailor has acknowledged receipt of the safety document at the beginning of the season. Carers/parents of the sailor are expected to have read this and to act in accordance with it, under the direction of the leader.

Fire Procedures

The fire alarm is the continuous ringing of the fire bell situated by the fire exit double doors in the briefing room.

The New Boathouse and Wet Zone Buildings are fitted with automatic Fire Detection and Alarm systems with Fire Alarm Panels and instructions for resetting Alarms when necessary.

Evacuation procedures

- On hearing the fire alarm, the base (clubhouse) should be evacuated immediately to the assembly point.
- The assembly point is the grassed area by the BLYM car park.
- SGL are responsible for accounting for all members of their group and will report information to the CVSS SHORE OFFICER.
- Individual sailors will report to the Shore Officer
- The Shore Officer will report to the Leader or his/nominated representative who retains overall operational control.
- No person may re-enter the premises unless instructed to do so by the Leader.

- If a powered or sailing craft catches fire, everyone should evacuate if safe to do so. This may mean transferring craft or entering the water. The fire should only be tackled if necessary to protect life.
- Fire extinguishers are to be checked on an annual basis to ensure they are still in good operational condition. A record of checks should be made.

You may need to evacuate the water.

CONSIDER whether returning sailors to the area of the clubhouse is the best option. Would it be safer to keep the boats on the water, or perhaps sail the boats to the most distant area of the lake? Keep safety boats informed as far as possible so they can reassure sailors.

5. Buoyancy Aids/Life Jackets

There are some CVSS rules adherence to which is essential for ensuring the safety of sailors and site users and these must be enforced.

All CVSS sailors who are independently mobile must wear buoyancy aids/ life -jackets whilst they are on site.

Sailors who are not independently mobile (i.e. are seated in a wheelchair which they cannot leave without assistance) must wear buoyancy aids/life-jackets when they sail or canoe, are in proximity to the water, watching sailing or preparing to sail.

Carers must wear buoyancy aids when they sail/canoe, when they are in proximity to the water and when they are supervising their group sailing.

Buoyancy aids/life jackets are inspected by BLYM/CVSS annually and a record made on the garment with the initials of the inspector and date of the inspection.

Crotch Straps IMPORTANT NOTICE : Crotch straps are fitted to CVSS smaller size buoyancy aids. When these are being worn the straps must be fitted correctly. It is not permitted to wear these loose and untied.

5. Cycling

Cycling is prohibited within the BLYM base.

6. Skate Boarding

Skate boarding and roller-skating is prohibited within the BLYM base.

7. Running

Running anywhere within the base is prohibited.

8. Dogs

CVSS welcomes Assistant Dogs on site, other dogs are prohibited. If a sailor brings an assistant dog the arrangements for care of it whilst the owner sails must be clear.

BLYM has different rules relating to dogs, CVSS rules are designed with regard to the needs of all our disabled sailors

9. Smoking

Smoking and “vapeing” is prohibited on the base.

10. Parking

Please park at the BLYM clubhouse with regard to the needs of others. If you have a disabled sticker please use a designated bay.

Vehicles are not to be parked within the base boundary without permission.

11. Clothing and hats

CVSS sailors are advised to wear clothing suitable for sailing (see advisory leaflet “Advice to Sailors, Parents and Carers”). They are also advised to consider wearing hats (attached to clothing by a clip or “string”) and sun cream or protective clothing when it is sunny

12. Footwear

Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times on the site and in boats to avoid impalement and other injuries. CVSS sailors/carers cannot sail in flip-flops, open-toed or high-heeled shoes. CVSS visitors wearing this type of footwear cannot use the wooden walkways or jetties. CVSS volunteers must wear appropriate footwear

13. Areas of BLYM Clubhouse that are “Out of Bounds

The GALLEY (KITCHEN) in the BLYM clubhouse is generally locked but if it is open it is out of bounds to CVSS sailors, parents and carers. Should you need to enter it please first get permission from a BLYM warden or CVSS leader / Shore Officer.

REMOVE YOUR BUOYANCY AID IF YOU GO INTO THE GALLEY

14. Roller Doors of new Clubhouse: Before operating the roller doors of the New Clubhouse ensure that the opening is clear. An opening or closing door will not stop if it hits or comes into contact with an obstruction.

15. Swimming: Recreational Swimming on Bury Lake is forbidden

16. First Aid: First Aid should be carried out to best of that person's ability. The SGL will ensure all first aid equipment including AED are available for use. Powerboat kits are to be checked every time they are launched

17. Fuel Store / Handling of Fuel: The fuel store must be kept locked when not in use. Fuel cans must be stored on the correct storage rack. The handling of fuel is to be supervised by a person holding a Powerboat Level 2 certificates. Fuel Spillages must be reported to the Warden and washed down. Fuel is Highly Flammable, no naked flames near the store or fuels containers. Air vents on tanks should remain open at all times. Powerboat fuel tanks must not be filled on the water.

18. Workshop: The workshop area is strictly out of bounds unless authorized by the SGL.

19. Lightning: In the event of lightning, SGL will decide whether to stop water activities.

20. Safety : The SGL will carry out a dynamic risk assessment throughout the duty, and will take appropriate measures to safeguard everyone from risks. The Leader must:

- Ensure there are sufficient rescue craft afloat and ready for use, and crews for the prevailing conditions. There must be a minimum of one safety boat launched.
- Ensure everyone wears clothing appropriate to the conditions whilst on or near the water.
- Ensure the General Recall Equipment of the red ball and a whistle are in place.
- Ensure boats are monitored for correct rigging and usage, ensuring that they are suitably reefed
- Ensure the water is watched at all times that sailing is taking place.
- Encourage all sailors engaged in water based activities to wash their hands after the activity and have a shower if immersed to prevent contamination by water borne diseases.

- The SGL must ensure an accident or near miss form is completed when an incident occurs and leave it in the First Aid Log Book.

21. Securing the premises

- When all boats are ashore the final rescue craft should be recovered.
- All boats, powerboats and their equipment should be stored.
- Boats may be left on the lake overnight. Before doing so operational needs and the imminent weather conditions should be considered.
- Clean and lock the galley.
- Clean the Changing Room floors and wipe all surfaces with disinfectant. Ensure all sailing kit and lost property is removed from the changing rooms.
- Ensure all windows are closed. Check all lights and appropriate electrical appliances, including heaters are turned off. All the lights in the Wet Zone and new Boat House buildings are on automatic sensors and will switch off as people leave.
- Check the building and grounds are tidy.

The following are to be locked:

- Boathouse main roller shutter door
- Fuel Stores, including fuel cans with kill cords and keys attached
- Katakonus

22. Powerboating

All powerboat drivers must be responsible and show due respect to other water users. Their driving must be safe and controlled. High-speed use of powerboats purely for pleasure purposes is not permitted. Drivers must stop the engine when in contact with people in the water, if safe to do so. Powerboat drivers must:

- Have the permission of the SGL
- Hold an RYA Powerboat Level 2 certificate, unless under instruction by an RYA Powerboat Instructor

Safety boat drivers must:

- Hold an RYA Safety Boat certificate
- Attend to distressed craft as rapidly and safely as possible, and prioritise according to their judgement when there are multiple distressed craft
- Prioritise people over boats
- Be prepared to enter the water
- Ensure the correct equipment is available, including anchor, throw line, knife, whistle, paddles, spare kill cord, and VHF radio
- Ensure they have a crew member if conditions demand it

23. Water Borne Health Risks

1. Blue – Green Algae RYA Code of Practice

A code of Practice to minimise the risks for dinghy sailors on inland waters affected by Blue-Green Algae. RYA May 1990

What is Blue- Green Algae?

The water at Bury Lake may be identified as being contaminated by potentially toxic Blue – Green Algae. This is not a new problem, in fact experts have advised the RYA that this algae has been recorded in fossil remains and probably been present in some inland waters since that time.

It is probable that the current increase in algae levels results from generally warmer weather conditions and increased farming nutrients entering reservoirs and lakes. There are no easy options for the removal of these nutrients; addition of chemicals such as copper to kill the algae would require subsequent expensive removal at water treatment plants. Sludge pumping the sediment from the bed of reservoirs would be impractical, and the present nutrient levels already in silt deposits could last many years into the future.

Although scientific understanding of the problem is not complete, we know that the organism can be toxic, and the level of toxicity can vary from day to day and indeed hour to hour. The complexity of toxicity testing means that it is not practicable to take daily tests as the results can take some days to assess. The organism should be regarded as a form of Bacterium rather than a 'plant'. In its most dangerous form, in quantity, it has caused death in cows,

sheep and dogs drinking significant concentrations at the waters edge by reason of its toxins.

These toxins have been identified as a Neurotoxin (Anatoxin A) attacking the nervous system, a Hepatotoxin causing acute liver damage (Microcystin) and an Endotoxin causing skin rash (Contact Dermatitis)

The greatest danger is in shallow water where wind current – driven concentrations of algae has built up. The scum on the waters edge is a particular source of toxic material. Although death has been recorded in animals venturing into thick concentrations of algae to bathe or drink water, or licking the scum and deposits off their fur when coming ashore, effects on humans to date have been limited to illness rather than death.

Adherence to the simple precautions detailed below can reduce the risk to health involved in sailing on contaminated water to an acceptable level.

Those who are most at risk:

Risk of exposure to toxic algae, if present. In descending order:

- Swimmers, paddlers, dogs, children playing at the waters edge, windsurfers.
- Dinghy and catamaran sailors, canoeists.
- Fishermen, pleasure cruisers.

Practical Points to reduce the Risk

The BLYM Committee has been advised that, if the water is affected by Blue-Green Algae, dinghy sailing activities can still take place provided certain conditions have been met.

- To avoid any legal liability on CVSS in the event of any damage, illness or death every person wishing to sail on potentially affected water may be required to sign CVSS Blue Green Algae Declaration at least once in each sailing season.
- When water is affected by this algae the following categories are particular at risk – paddlers, trainees doing capsized drill, swimmers (including immersion sports) small children, pregnant women, domestic animals (if allowed to play in the water or drink it).
- On a Lee shore on a windy day algae and scum can be found at some distance from the water – keep animals and children away from these areas.

- Dinghy sailors should wear clothing that is close fitting at the wrist and neck, also boots and sailing suits, which fit into the top of their boots to minimise contact with algae or scum.
- Minimal time should be spent in shallow water launching and recovering boats and launching / recovery should be in areas away from thick aggregations of algae or scum.
- Consult the club notice board before sailing for detailed information as to areas of the water to be particularly avoided.
- After coming ashore sailors should hose themselves down to

- Avoid immersion or contact with lake water
- Avoid areas of the lake where the scum collects (usually the lee shore).
- Shower in clean water after accidental immersion.
- Wash hands when you come off the water.
- Shower in clean water at the end of your session.
- Rinse clothing in clean water after sailing

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

There is a high density of Blue-Green Algae in Bury Lake at present.

Blue-Green Algae is not harmful itself, but it gives off a toxic gas that can form a scum on the surface of the water. If ingested (swallowed) this scum can cause nausea, and may be very harmful if large quantities are taken.

We recommend the advice given by the Royal Yachting Association

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding

avoid bringing scum and algae into changing rooms. All clothing should be washed and thoroughly dried on returning home. Do not store wet clothes.

- If taking part in working parties in or close to the water do not strip off, even on hot days, to do so risks contacting dermatitis.
- Avoid horseplay in or near water.

BLYM/C.V.S.S. BLUE GREEN ALGAE NOTICE DISPLAYED WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM:

Local Authority Procedures and Notices

The notices shown below, from Three Rivers District Council shall be displayed in accordance with the level identified by the Council.

Stage 1

Blue-Green Algae is present in this lake. This is a natural occurring organism. In its mature stage, and if concentration becomes high, there is a risk to health in the event of significant contact or ingestion (swallowing).

If the conditions worsen further notices will be posted giving information.

A natural treatment (barley straw, in bales and liquid extract form) is being applied to the lake to reduce the algae growth.

Watersports managed by the following organisations may continue as precautions to minimise the risk to participants have been taken:

- Bury Lake Young Mariners
- Nomad kayak Club (canoeing)
- Rickmansworth Radio-Controlled Yacht Club (model boating)
- Rickmansworth Windsurfing Club (windsurfing)
- Out of Town Action Sports (windsurfing, canoeing, raft building)

For Further information please contact either Gloria Gillespie 01923 727006 or Karen Fishwick 01923 727152 at Three Rivers District Council

Stage 2/3

Blue-Green Algae is present in this lake. This is a natural occurring organism. In its mature stage, and if concentration becomes high, there is a risk to health in the event of significant contact or ingestion (swallowing).

Recent tests of the water have shown that concentration of algae currently exceeds health-warning levels.

To minimise risk you are advised to avoid contact with the water. Individuals should not swim or use their own craft in the water. Dog owners should not permit their pets to swim or enter the water or drink from the lake. Toxins occur in a gas given off by the algae. This may have the appearance of a brown or green surface froth or scum, and is likely to collect at the edge of the lake with the effects of the wind. These areas should be particularly avoided. Please be aware that algae can be carried onto the grass banks at the edge of the lake by waterfowl and the wind.

These precautions are for your wellbeing, so please observe them.

A natural treatment (barley straw, in bales and liquid extract form) is being applied to the lake to reduce the algae growth.

Watersports managed by the following organisations may continue with certain restrictions, as precautions to minimise the risk to participants have been taken:

- Bury Lake Young Mariners including CVSS
- Nomad kayak Club (canoeing)
- Rickmansworth Radio-Controlled Yacht Club (model boating)
- Rickmansworth Windsurfing Club (windsurfing)
- Out of Town Action Sports (windsurfing, canoeing, raft building)

For Further information please contact either Gloria Gillespie 01923 727006 or Karen Fishwick 01923 727152 at Three Rivers District Council.

Stage 4

Blue-Green Algae is present in this lake. This is a natural occurring organism. In its mature stage, and if concentration becomes high, there is a risk to health in the event of significant contact or ingestion (swallowing). Possible effects include skin rash, nausea, muscle pains, etc.

Recent tests of the water have shown that concentration of algae currently exceeds health-warning levels.

To minimise risk you are advised to avoid contact with the water. Individuals should not swim or use their own craft in the water. Dog owners should not permit their pets to swim or enter the water or drink from the lake. Toxins occur in a gas given off by the algae. This may have the appearance of a brown or green surface froth or scum, and is likely to collect at the edge of the lake with the effects of the wind. These areas should be particularly avoided. Please be aware that algae can be carried onto the grass banks at the edge of the lake by waterfowl and the wind.

These precautions are for your wellbeing, so please observe them.

A natural treatment (barley straw, in bales and liquid extract form) is being applied to the lake to reduce the algae growth.

Watersports managed by the following organisations may continue with certain restrictions, as precautions to minimise the risk to participants have been taken:

- Bury Lake Young Mariners
- Nomad kayak Club (canoeing)
- Rickmansworth Radio-Controlled Yacht Club (model boating)
- Rickmansworth Windsurfing Club (windsurfing)
- Out of Town Action Sports (windsurfing, canoeing, raft building)

These organisations and Three Rivers District Council will monitor the situation on a daily basis, and suspend activities if the conditions significantly deteriorate so as the only way to minimise the risk is to suspend all such activities.

Further notices will be posted when the water quality returns to normal.

For Further information please contact either Gloria Gillespie 01923 727006 or Karen Fishwick 01923 727152 at Three Rivers District Council.

Stage 5

Blue-Green Algae is present in this lake. This is a natural occurring organism. In its mature stage, and if concentration becomes high, there is a risk to health in the event of significant contact or ingestion (swallowing). Possible effects include skin rash, nausea, muscle pains, etc.

Recent tests of the water have shown that concentration of algae currently exceeds health-warning levels.

To minimise risk you are advised to avoid contact with the water. Individuals should not swim or use their own craft in the water. Dog owners should not permit their pets to swim or enter the water or drink from the lake. Toxins occur in a gas given off by the algae. This may have the appearance of a brown or green surface froth or scum, and is likely to collect at the edge of the lake with the effects of the wind. These areas should be particularly avoided. Please be aware that algae can be carried onto the grass banks at the edge of the lake by waterfowl and the wind.

These precautions are for your wellbeing, so please observe them.

In the event of accidental contact with contaminated water, wash thoroughly with clean water. If symptoms occur, seek medical advice.

A natural treatment (barley straw, in bales and liquid extract form) is being applied to the lake to reduce the algae growth.

Further notices will be posted when the water quality returns to normal.

For Further information please contact either Gloria Gillespie 01923 727006 or Karen Fishwick 01923 727152 at Three Rivers District Council.

Return to Normal

Blue-Green Algae which has been present in the lake has now reduced in concentration and is below health warning levels. We regret the need for recent restrictions, and thank you for your co-operation in observing them.

You are reminded that swimming and the use of privately-owned watercraft is not permitted at any time. For general health and safety reasons contact with the water is not recommended, and dog owners are advised not to allow their pets to enter the lake

Three rivers District Council licenses the following organisations for watersports on the lake:

- Bury Lake Young Mariners including C.V.S.S.
- Nomad kayak Club (canoeing)
- Rickmansworth Radio-Controlled Yacht Club (model boating)
- Rickmansworth Windsurfing Club (windsurfing)
- Out of Town Action Sports (windsurfing, canoeing, raft building)

For Further information please contact either Gloria Gillespie 01923 727006 or Karen Fishwick 01923 727152 at Three Rivers District Council.

2. Weil's Disease RYA Code of Practice – August 1989

BLYM has adopted the RYA policy on Weil's Disease exposted below.

Information

The national rat population is increasing and between 50 to 60 percent of rats carry and excrete the organism *Leptospira ictero-haemorrhagiae* in their urine. Infection with the organism causes an illness which has been known to result in death of 10 percent cases.

There has been a recent increase in the incidence of the disease – 133 cases notified in 1988, compared with only 68 in 1987 and 32 in 1986.

Formerly occurring mainly among sewage or abattoir workers and miners, recent records show that the majority of fatalities are now related to water activities. In 1989 there have been 19 deaths of which no less than 13 were associated with water use.

The nature of leisure water activities means that the average age of this at – risk group is fairly young with most cases occurring in the 13 to 42 age group.

About the Illness

The organism enters the human body through breaks in the skin such as cuts, blisters and abrasions or via the lining of the nose, throat or alimentary tract.

The incubation period is 7 to 13 days and the disease starts with a fever, muscular aches and pains, loss of appetite and vomiting and prostration.

It is vital that the doctor be told of any water borne activity as the symptoms are easily confused with those of a flu and if the patient has a clean occupation the possibility of Weil 's disease may be overlooked in the early stages.

Subsequent bruising of the skin, sore eyes, nosebleeds and jaundice may occur. The fever lasts about 5 days and may be followed by significant deterioration.

Laboratory testing of blood will confirm the diagnosis but this may take time in an ordinary hospital lab. Send samples direct to:

The Leptospirosis Reference Unit
Public Health Laboratory
County Hospital
Heresford
HR1 2ER
Tel: 01432 277707

Samples will be tested within 24 hours. Treatment is usually by Penicillin Antibiotic.

Rats and the Illness

The rat is a creature of the waters edge. The leptospira organism is passed in urine and, while it does not live long in dry conditions, can survive for some time in water. Salt water soon kills off the organism but there is a significant risk in tidal waters as lower parts of the Thames and other rivers. The risk increases upstream and is greatest in canals, ponds or areas of slowly draining water. There is a significant risk to users of riverbanks and reservoir edges.

Water Users

Sailors, board-sailors, canoeists, oarsmen, swimmers or fisherman are at risk in any area with a population of rats. Any skin wound or blister, old or new, may be infected if immersed in water polluted with the organism.

Prevention

Every sailing club should have available to members at all times a supply of clean fresh water to wash wounds and a shower for those who may have fallen into suspended water. During Winter Frostbite series it is important that such washing is still available from a stand pipe if the club's water has been turned off to reduce the risk of frost damage.

Waterproof surgical plasters of an adequate size must be readily available for the use of those injured whilst sailing. Old skin wounds should be covered before going afloat or to the dinghy park. Such protection will also apply to club working weekends when members may be clearing old structures or other hazards.

Food Residues

Every effort must be made to see that food residues are removed from the club house, boat and trailer parks or picnic areas. A happy well-nourished rat will produce more rats.

If a rat population is suspected the Local Environmental Health Officer should be informed and requested to take action. If poison is laid, members should be warned, so that pets and children come to no harm.

General Care

Handrails, steps and walkways should be checked for gaps, nails or rough edges that may cause minor wounds.

If rats have been noted in a particular area steps should be taken to inform members and warning notices displayed.

Children's play areas and refuse areas should be monitored with particular care. Refuse should be disposed of regularly either by burning or some other means.

Wear shoes to protect feet from cuts.

Don't allow water to collect inside your dinghy it may be wet but it may not be water.