

Anna Duffey

From: Lori Hollingshead
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 4:05 PM
To: Debbie McDowell
Cc: Jerome Fletcher; Jason Yarborough; Julie Bellia; Anna Duffey; Chuck Speake
Subject: Fwd: Cosmic Waterway algae bloom

Good Afternoon, Commissioner McDowell,

In reference to your request for an update on regarding the Cosmic Waterway algae bloom and the DEP results, staff provides the following response for you:

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) collected a sample from the Cosmic Waterway on May 24, 2022 at our request and reported the following findings:

- Chlorophyll-*a* corrected is 100ug/L and is very high as expected based on the visual green color of the water -- Normally, the level in our canals is less than 5ug/L. There is no regulatory limit for chlorophyll in manmade freshwater canals.
- Algal toxins (microcystin) toxins are low and below detection limit -- No fish kill was observed, so this is good.
- Nitrogen is 1.9 mg/L and unusually high for this time of the year -- Possibly indicative of fertilizer runoff.
- Phosphorus is 0.091 mg/L and bit high for this time of the year -- Possibly indicative of fertilizer runoff.

Public Works staff inspected that area on May 23, 2022 and observed many lush green lawns in the area of the Cosmic Waterway. Staff spoke to a homeowner near the sampling point who indicated his lawn maintenance company had been fertilizing his lawn (very lush green) near the time of the algal bloom.

Companies that apply fertilizers for residents are probably aware of our Fertilizer Ordinance restriction beginning on June 1 and perhaps had applied fertilizers in May. The rains in May could have increased the fertilizer runoff contribution to the canal.

Today, a staff member who lives along the canal indicated that the canal is no longer green. With recent rains and the restriction on fertilizing lawns (which began June 1), dilution and flushing has now taken place.

Three conditions that will contribute to algal bloom: (1) Nutrients (2) Sunny, warm weather conditions (3) Water. We cannot get rid of (2) and (3).

Lori Hollingshead

Administrative Services Specialist
Office of the City Manager
City of North Port
PH: 941-429-7240

lhollingshead@cityofnorthport.com
www.cityofnorthport.com

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From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 22, 2022 10:45 AM
To: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@cityofnorthport.com>
Cc: Chuck Speake <cspeake@cityofnorthport.com>; Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@cityofnorthport.com>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Cosmic Waterway algae bloom?

Curiosity is killing me!!! 😊 What did the DEP results show as the root cause of the neon green coloration to the Cosmic Waterway?

Debbie

From: Chuck Speake <cspeake@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 1:38 PM
To: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Cc: Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@cityofnorthport.com>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@cityofnorthport.com>; Elizabeth Wong <ewong@cityofnorthport.com>; Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@cityofnorthport.com>; Frances N. Lugo <flugo@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Cosmic Waterway algae bloom?

Commissioner McDowell,
As a follow-up to your email below regarding the algae bloom on the Cosmic Waterway.

Department of Public Works Staff have already made contact with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding this issue and they have agreed to have samples taken today or tomorrow of the algae bloom. DEP will provide us information on their findings once they have the samples analyzed.

If you need anything further please let me know.

Chuck Speake
Director
Department of Public Works
City of North Port
1100 North Chamberlain Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286
941-240-8090

From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 1:04 PM
To: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@cityofnorthport.com>
Cc: Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@cityofnorthport.com>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@cityofnorthport.com>; Barbara Lockhart <bml3220@gmail.com>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Cosmic Waterway algae bloom?

Importance: High

Jerome –

I've lived here 30 years and I don't ever remember any canal having this lime-green color the entire width of a canal, for days. I acknowledge there can be a dark greenish brown tinge to the water with some floaties a couple times a year, but nothing ever like this. After emailing Ms. Lockhart she said she started noticing the odd color in the morning of May 20. You can see from the two new photos she shared with me today (20220524 date stamp) there isn't much change in comparison to the photos she took two days ago (20240522 date stamps).

I am concerned with what's in that water to make it look like that. It almost looks like it could glow! Ms. Lockhart's email states the canal was sprayed April 26. If it was the chemicals, it shouldn't affect the canal a month later or only this time. I am hopeful staff will have some insight on what could be causing this. Maybe staff can test the water to ensure nothing hazardous was dumped in the canal? I'll follow up with you in 10 to 14 days

Thanks
Debbie

From: Barbara Lockhart <bml3220@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 9:42 AM

To: Jill Luke <jluke@cityofnorthport.com>; Alice White <awhite@cityofnorthport.com>; Barbara Langdon <blangdon@cityofnorthport.com>; Pete Emrich <pemrich@cityofnorthport.com>; Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Cosmic Waterway algae bloom?



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Good morning Commissioners, I'm sharing the email I sent below to Elizabeth Wong yesterday for your information with photos regarding what appears to be an algae bloom in the Cosmic Waterway. I had meant to copy Julie and Chuck too so I forwarded it to them separately this morning.

I've lived here on the Cosmic Waterway for 8 years and I have never seen it look like this before. Please be assured I never edit my photos; these are not enhanced in any way. Whether it's the recent heat, lack of rain, more runoff due to more development, a change in chemicals City staff is using, a compilation of dead vegetation on the waterway bottoms, or something else, the recipe doesn't appear to be a healthy one. I'm no water expert so I only can go by the education I do have and what I see. The last time the City came through and sprayed the Cosmic was April 26th.

I know some of you have heard me say this before but I'll say it again: it is past due time to reconsider how our waterways are being managed. Not only are they habitat for wildlife, they are our drinking supply, and the periodic load of chemicals that is being intentionally added to them by staff spraying on top of what is already flowing into them from dirty runoff from chemically sprayed lawns, parking lots, roadways, etc. citywide cannot be healthy for people, our wildlife, or the Myakka, Charlotte Harbor or Gulf, where all of our waterways eventually flow. We are contributors to the health of these other water bodies. Healthy water quality is crucial to the future of our State and just because the city holds a license to spray that doesn't mean it has to use it. This applies to our r-ditches too. Spraying them means more chemical runoff into our waterways since they are water vehicles.

It is my understanding that an amphibious vehicle was purchased some time ago that was supposed to be utilized for removal of water lettuce in our waterways. A suggestion would be to create a pilot program for non-spraying - choose a waterway or two as an experiment, stop spraying and see how the vegetation grows along the banks if left alone, see

where the water lettuce collects and gather it with the machine when it collects to excessive amounts, and see how this concept works when it comes to cost, staff time, waterway health and drainage (not spraying anything should immediately save the city money I would guess). We'll never know what's going to happen if we stop spraying until we stop spraying. I would be happy to act as a volunteer along the Cosmic Waterway to help monitor what happens if the spraying is stopped over time since I live on it, and I'm certain I can gather a few volunteers to assist me in this endeavor.

I will be sharing this information with our Environmental Advisory Board as well. I would also appreciate a conversation on this topic on the dias sometime soon, when you can fit it in, if you agree with me that a conversation needs to be had.

As always thank you for your time.

Barbara Lockhart
BML3220@GMAIL.COM
9412189875