



## Councillor Paul Taylor

### Division 10

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CITY OF  
**GOLDCOAST.**

Dear Resident

### Lake Hugh Muntz – Message from Cr Taylor

Lake Hugh Muntz continues to experience an algal bloom. This bloom is unprecedented and has exceeded the duration of the last two algal bloom events in the lake. The city will continue to proactively monitor the water quality and ensure signage is in place to ensure public safety.

During algal blooms the water can have reduced clarity, undergo colour changes and from time to time a thick green or brown scum can appear at locations around the lake depending on the direction of the wind. At certain stages of an algal bloom, aquatic animals such as fish can also be impacted.

Whilst this issue cannot be resolved with a single solution, short and long term recommendations that may assist in the lake's recovery are being explored by city officers with the assistance of Griffith University experts. Aeration is currently one of the options being assessed. Although this may be a feasible long term recommendation, introducing aeration at this stage of the bloom may re-suspend sediment and potentially provide extra nutrients for the algae to feed on, prolonging the overall algal bloom. The city will continue to explore mitigation options and provide updates on the feasible short and long-term recommendations for the lake.

### TESTING AND RESEARCH

The city has engaged experts from Griffith University in the fields of water chemistry, cyanobacteria and lake restoration to review the current algal bloom and its characteristics. These experts will assist in developing recommendations to address the current algal bloom and help reduce the frequency and intensity of future algal blooms.

All recommendations will be examined against the dynamics and specifics of Lake Hugh Muntz and the environmental, social and financial benefit assessments. This lake has undergone a number of significant changes over its 35 year life and all recommendations need to be assessed to avoid introducing solutions that may have a detrimental impact. In conjunction with these recommendations the 2008 management plan will also be reviewed and updated. This will ensure the plan's initiatives reflect the current characteristics of the lake.

On 4 April, city officers and I met with a number of representatives of the Lake Hugh Muntz Care Group. Discussions focussed on the current health of the lake and initiatives being pursued by the city to minimise the occurrence of future algal blooms. It was agreed at the meeting that the city will continue to work closely with the care group to find solutions to the current algal bloom and develop a long term management plan to reduce the frequency and duration of future algal blooms.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP MAINTAIN LAKE HEALTH

#### Dog washing

If you use one of the city's commercial dog washing operators to wash your dog, it's a good idea to ask for the water to be discharged into one of your garden beds or across your lawn. This will prevent unwanted dirty soapy water flowing into the stormwater network and significantly impacting the environmental health of the lake.

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**Dog and animal droppings**

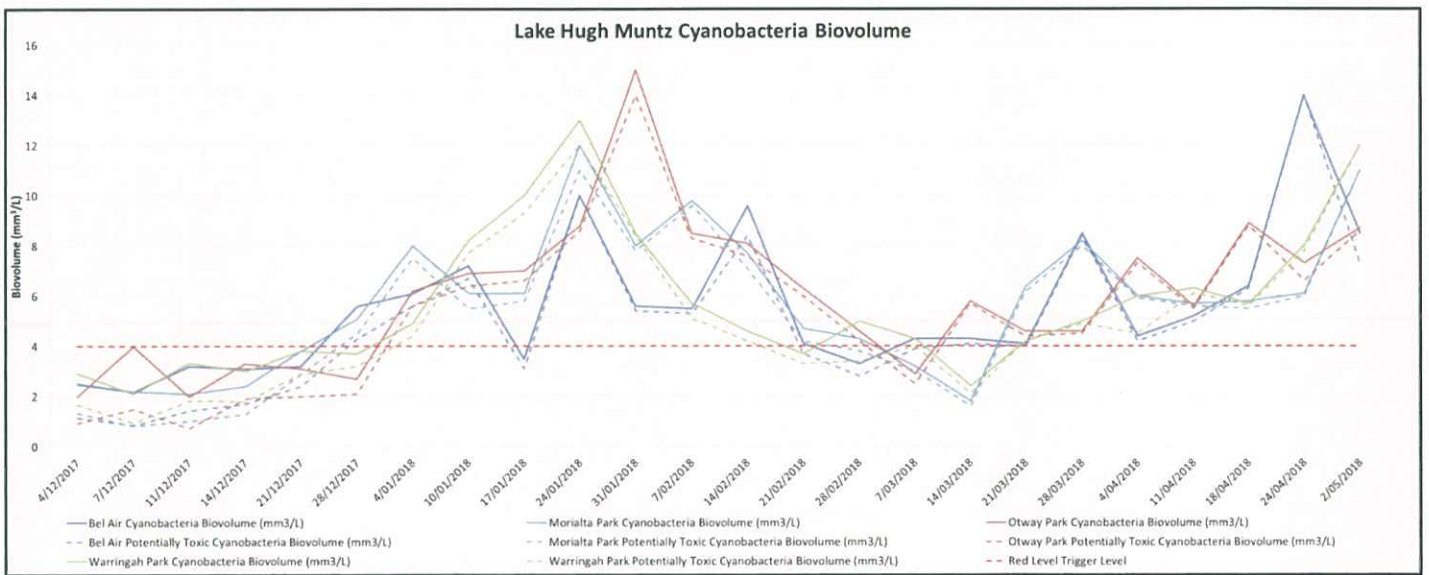
There is no doubt dogs make wonderful companions and are highly valued as family pets. If you are a dog owner, please pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste correctly. Decaying droppings washed into the lake directly affect the water quality by creating nutrients for algae to grow as well as transporting faecal coliforms that can cause waterbodies to become unsuitable for recreational activities.

The Lake Hugh Muntz Care Group undertook a dog dropping survey and in one day collected over 170 dog droppings within the lake’s stormwater catchment.

To find out more on responsible pet ownership please visit the City of Gold Coast website:  
<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/community/breaches-fines-38070.html>

**WATER QUALITY**

The most current graph indicating the recent bloom is outlined below:



Towards the end of January algal counts peaked followed by a steady decline in the numbers. This could be attributed to several factors such as the algal biomass utilising the amount of available nutrients in the lake or the feeding on the algae by small zooplankton. Both of these processes are part of the natural life cycle of algae.

As the graph indicates, in late February and March the numbers came close to being below the national guidelines. This period coincided with rain events and extended periods of cloud cover. When the weather cleared, the algae numbers increased. This could be due to new nutrients that flowed into the lake during wet periods and calm sunny days that are ideal for algal growth. As the water temperature decreases coming into the colder winter months there should be drop in algae concentrations.

Despite the presence of an algal bloom and species that can produce toxins, toxins may not always be present. The production of toxins is difficult to predict and varies depending on a number of environmental and climatic factors. The primary routes of exposure to cyanobacteria and their toxins during recreational water use can occur through:

- direct contact with the body whilst swimming/recreating
- accidental ingestion of water
- consumption of fish or shellfish caught within the waterbody

For this reason the city continues to monitor Lake Hugh Muntz and reminds residents, visitors and pet owners to follow signed advice and refrain from contact with the lake.

**REMEMBER, EVERYONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Time can be critical in preventing environmental damage. If you become aware of pollutants in a waterway in your local area and to ensure the necessary response can be initiated, please contact Environmental Health on 5667 5988 or 1800 637 000 (after hours).

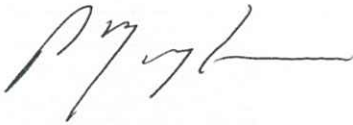
**FURTHER ENQUIRIES**

City officers are on hand to assist if you have any further questions about the ongoing management of Lake Hugh Muntz. Please contact the city's Senior Environmental Engineer for lakes and waterways on **1300 GOLDCOAST (1300 465 326)** or 5582 8211 between 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday (excluding Gold Coast public holidays),

Alternatively, contact can also be made via the City of Gold Coast website:

<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/contact-council-1018.html>

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Taylor', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor Paul Taylor MAICD  
**COUNCILLOR FOR DIVISION 10**  
**Chair Water and Waste Committee**