

PRESS RELEASE: 2025 Lyngbya Control Treatments To Begin at Lake Norman, Mountain Island, and Lake Wylie

The Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group (LWMG), through partnerships with funding sources, including surrounding counties and utility groups, the Lake Norman and Lake Wylie Marine Commissions, North Carolina State University, and Duke Energy, are facilitating the 2025 treatment program focused on controlling the growth of lyngbya within Lake Norman, Mountain Island, and Lake Wylie. This joint program is intended to reduce logistical issues encountered by coordinating three lyngbya treatment programs on adjacent multi-use reservoirs. For the 2025 season, this partnership has resulted in the expansion of treatment acreage from the 2024 season for all three reservoirs. Treatment sites total approximately 60 acres throughout the central part of the basin, with Lake Norman and Mountain Island both receiving 25 acres and Lake Wylie receiving 10 acres of targeted treatments.

Lyngbya (*Microseria wollei*, formally *Lyngbya wollei*) is a genera of filamentous cyanobacteria that includes both freshwater and marine species. Lyngbya can be identified by dense, dark-colored mat formations, wool-like texture, and musty odor. Unlike other algae lyngbya persists year-round along the lake bottom, but as water temperatures rise it begins to proliferate upwards through the water column forming floating mats at the water's surface. Lyngbya has become increasingly problematic in reservoirs throughout the southeastern US, including Lake Gaston, located along the North Carolina and Virginia border, that reported over 1,000 acres of infestation in 2024.

Between the months of April and September, sites within the three reservoirs will receive monthly treatments by the application company [Aqua Services, Inc.](#) using algaecide products distributed by [SePRO Corporation](#). During the mid-part of each month from April to September, residents in treatment areas should expect to see airboats utilized by the application company slowly moving along the shoreline applying lyngbya directed algaecides in established treatment sites. The chemical protocol that will be used includes chelated copper-based algaecides that are EPA-approved for aquatic use. These algaecides have a bright blue hue and will be observed in the water directly following applications but have no use restrictions in terms of irrigation, fishing, or swimming.

The timeline for achieving lyngbya control is difficult to estimate, but is expected to be a multi-year process. Due to the physical nature of lyngbya, healthy, viable mats look very similar visually to those that are less viable at the alga's cellular level and therefore it is difficult to determine the immediate impact of treatments by visual observation alone. Within a treatment season, it is expected that lyngbya mat material may persist along the bottom of the lake, however, homeowners are likely to observe a decrease in overall biomass between treatment seasons. Additionally, homeowners may notice an immediate response to treatments with the absence of surface mat formations.

This lyngbya management program was designed using the same protocol being implemented at Lake Gaston (NC/VA), where it has demonstrated success in reducing the presence of lyngbya over time with repeated treatments.

Any questions about aquatic vegetation in the Catawba River should be directed to AquaticPlants@duke-energy.com. The Duke Energy Aquatic Plant Reporting Tool can be found at duke-energy.com/AquaticPlants.

Submitted by: Jessica Baumann, extension associate for the North Carolina State University's Aquatic Plant Management Program.