

Community update on response to fish deaths in Menindee and Lower Darling-Baaka

Dissolved oxygen levels in the Menindee weir pool remain at adequate levels

The dissolved oxygen levels in the Menindee weir pool remain at adequate levels for fish health.

Continued water releases

From Wednesday 27 March, water releases from Lake Pamamaroo dropped to 500ML/day. Lake Menindee releases of 50 ML/day will remain the same. Water quality is holding steady at this point and temperatures are predicted to be cooler over the weekend.

Current blue-green algae alerts issued by WaterNSW

WaterNSW has issued a Red Alert advisory for high levels of blue-green algae in the Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling. **See map at Figure 1.**

In addition to permanent warning signage in place at the Menindee town gauge and the town boat ramp, temporary signage is in place at Pamamaroo Outlet, Wetherell Outlet, Burke and Wills campsite, Copi Hollow swimming area, Broken Hill side of the Menindee Inlet Channel (heading into Menindee). For information on algal alerts and monitoring results visit:

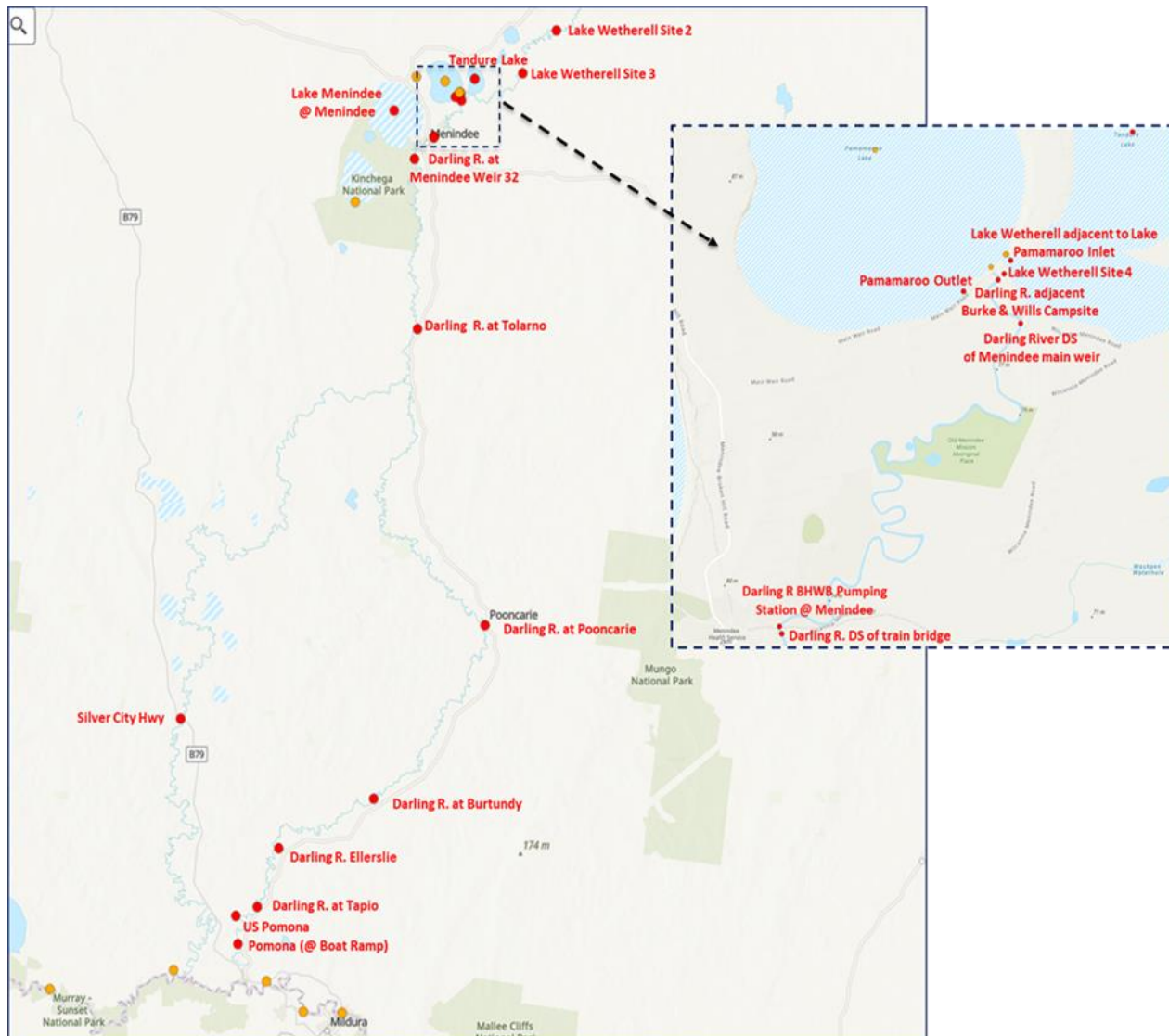
<https://www.waternsw.com.au/water-services/water-quality/algae-alerts>

What does a red alert for blue-green algae mean?

Red Alert warnings apply only to untreated water at the identified location and will remain in place until monitoring and test results confirm that the risk is sufficiently diminished. People should:

- **AVOID** consuming untreated water from this waterbody and prevent pets and livestock from drinking this water.
- **AVOID** recreational activities such as swimming, water skiing, canoeing and any other activity that brings them into contact with this waterbody until the red alert warning is lifted.
- **BE AWARE** that potentially toxic blue-green algae may cause gastroenteritis if consumed, while contact can cause skin and eye irritations. Consumption of water containing algal toxins may cause liver damage and other health problems. Boiling the water does not remove algal toxins. People who suspect they have been affected by blue-green algae should seek medical advice.
- **NOT** eat mussels or crayfish from red alert warning areas.
- **AVOID** fishing during a bloom to minimise risk.

Figure 1. Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling River. Algae Alerts NSW map - WaterNSW



Is the drinking water safe?

- Yes. Essential Water issued advice that the quality of drinking water for customers has not been impacted by the high levels of blue-green algae identified in the Darling River in the Far West of NSW.
- DO NOT drink untreated water taken directly from the river as it is not considered potable and local residents are encouraged to prevent pets and livestock from drinking the river water.

Standpipe water supply

The standpipe in Menindee supplies clean water which is available to people that do not have access to drinking water.

Water carting

- Rural residents who are not connected to town water supply need to organise their own water carting directly with private water carting operators who have access to treated water that is connected to the town water supply.
- This is standard practice across regional NSW for residents not connected to town water supply.
- Residents can contact council if they require more information on water carting.

Keeping up to date

Anyone wishing to receive this and other related updates from NSW Government can subscribe by emailing water.enquiries@dpi.nsw.gov.au and mention you would like Menindee updates.

Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: waterqualitydata@dpi.nsw.gov.au
- To view community updates issued, visit [Community updates and frequently asked questions | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the NSW DPI Fisheries Phoneline 1800 043 536 or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills-2019-2020/info-sheet>
- Information on recent fish deaths is available at: [Fish kills in NSW](#). When reporting, please include the name of the river/waterbody, location and date of your observation and provide photographs. If possible, please also record what species are affected and an estimate of number of each species observed.
- Further information on blackwater events can be found at the DCCEE Water website at: [Hypoxic blackwater | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- Additional information is also available on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority website at: <https://www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths>
<https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes>
- Operational updates are available at: [WaterInsights - WaterNSW](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill>