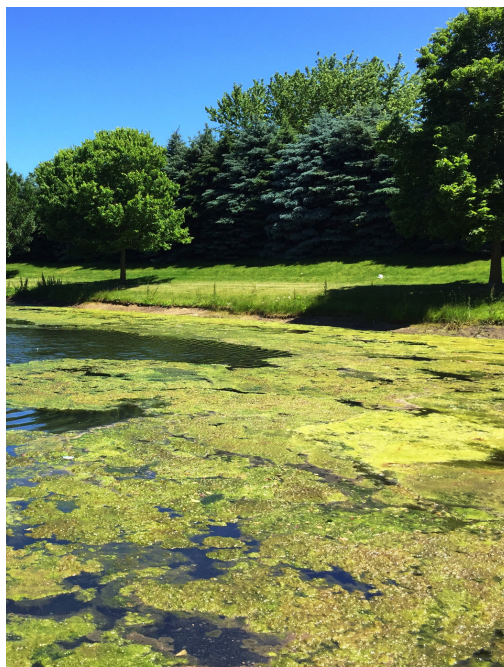


# Nitrate and Algae

Nitrate pollution can lead to toxic algal blooms, which can harm human health, the environment, and our economy. Luckily, Nitrate Watch gives you the ability to assess nitrate pollution in the waterways you care about.

## NECESSARY NUTRIENT TO POLLUTION PROBLEM

Nitrate is a naturally occurring compound and an important nutrient for plant growth. Unfortunately, chemical fertilizers, animal waste, and leaky septic tanks introduce excessive amounts of nitrate to the landscape, which washes away and collects in surface waters or seeps into the water table.



## JOIN NITRATE WATCH

Want to learn more about nitrate pollution in your community? Visit [nitratewatch.org](https://nitratewatch.org) to request your free nitrate test kit!

## ALGAL BLOOMS

When exposed to excess nitrate, algae utilize the nutrient and explode in population, forming an **algal bloom**. The rapid growth and decay of algae sets off a cascade of effects, including:

- Lack of oxygen and available food causes **fish kills** and **dead zones**
- Release of **toxins** like microcystin threatens wildlife, pets and humans
- Film of **scum** impacts recreation, businesses, and property values
- Raises **treatment costs** for drinking water

