



Friday, January 28, 2005

***Trichodesmium* algae bloom detected at Hardy Inlet**

The Department of Environment has detected a potentially harmful algal bloom in the Hardy Inlet near Augusta.

The *Trichodesmium* bloom, which appears to have originated from Dukes Head near Augusta, has migrated into the inlet with tidal movements.

Water affected by the algae may first appear as having a brownish surface scum then become pink in colour due to a pigment released by the dying algal cells.

South West Regional manager Wayne Tingey said people were urged to be cautious if they noticed any discoloured water, particularly around the inlet mouth.

“The bloom appeared to be breaking down, however, onshore winds within the next couple of days may cause the more of the bloom to move back into the Hardy Inlet,” he said.

DoE Natural Resource Management Officers carried out routine sampling yesterday on the Hardy Inlet and will continue to monitor until the bloom breaks down completely.

Mr Tingey said all algal scums were generally accepted as a potential recreational risk and warning signs would be erected by the Augusta-Margaret River Shire Council.

People are urged to avoid direct contact with the algal bloom, which may cause skin irritations for some people.

Anyone who comes in contact with affected water should wash off any scum with clean water and to seek medical attention if they develop rashes or feel unwell.

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