SOUTHERN CAYUGA LAKE INTERMUNICIPAL WATER COMMISSION

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Harmful Algal Bloom and Cyanotoxins Update on Cayuga Lake - July 12, 2019

The Bolton Point Water System has taken steps to identify and protect the public water system from Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) that are occurring on Cayuga Lake. These HABs can cause a variety of water quality challenges for drinking water utilities, including taste and odor issues, elevated raw water turbidity, increased disinfection byproduct formation and cyanotoxins.

In 2017, Bolton Point and Arcadis Engineering performed a study to determine treatment options to remove cyanotoxins from the raw water sent to the Treatment Plant. Results from the study focused on optimizing coagulation, flocculation and sedimentation as the key line of defense against cyanotoxins in the water treatment process. It is also worth mentioning the depth of the Bolton Point Water System intake (60 feet) and distance from the shoreline (400 feet) is well below the depths (1.5 and 18 feet below the surface) at which the New York State DEC has been sampling for cyanotoxins in Cayuga Lake. Although the possibility of having cyanotoxins present at a depth of 60 feet is possible, it should be lower than the likelihood at or near the surface of the water.

Bolton Point has taken several steps to help identify possible HABs and cyanotoxins near the systems water intake and inside the treatment facilities. Several times per day, Bolton Point staff walk the shore line north and south of the water intake point to visually search for HABs. If HABs are spotted, samples are taken and sent to the Community Science Institute in Ithaca for analysis. Bolton Point has also begun using a drone to perform inspections for HABs along the lakeshore and on the water surface above the systems intake point (400 feet) offshore. A fluoroprobe has been added to the raw water pump station to measure and identify chlorophyll levels with algae class determination in the water. This enables an onsite analysis of an occurrence before a laboratory analysis occurs.

The Bolton Point Water System has taken these steps to protect the public drinking water supply and its customers. Additional equipment to identify and treat HABs is being investigated and may be added in the future.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself or Bolton Point's Production Manager, Glenn Ratajczak. Contact information is listed below.

Thank you,

Bolton Point Water System General Manager, Steve Riddle

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