



## Cayuga County Health Department Hydrilla – Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Harpoon Granular



### **Health and safety questions for Aurora residents and visitors regarding the application of Harpoon Granular to treat Hydrilla**

Harpoon Granular is an herbicide used to control underwater plants including the rapidly growing, invasive plant species Hydrilla. The active ingredient is copper.

Harpoon Granular, a copper-based granular herbicide, will be used in Cayuga Lake near Aurora to spot treat small areas of Hydrilla that may be found in the lake outside the main Hydrilla infestation area. The map of the treatment area can be found on the [“Eradication Project in Aurora” webpage](#).

These products will be applied by a New York State licensed professional applicator. According to information provided by the applicator, the chemical will be applied at the water surface at an initial treatment concentration of 1 part per million (ppm).

**1. Does the Harpoon Granular label have restrictions on swimming and water use during treatment?**

The Harpoon Granular label does not impose restrictions on drinking, fishing, swimming, boating, or domestic use of treated water at the concentrations that will be applied.

**2. Are health impacts expected from drinking the water served to the Village and Wells College during the treatment period?**

Drinking water served to the Village of Aurora and Wells College comes from Cayuga Lake. The intake for the water treatment plant is not near the projected areas of application of Harpoon Granular; however, lake water from the treated area may flow toward the intake pipe. This could result in low levels of copper being detected in the drinking water. People with Wilson’s Disease have increased sensitivity to copper and should consult their physician regarding this treatment and any precautions that should be taken.

Copper, the active ingredient in Harpoon Granular, is a metal that occurs naturally in plants, animals, and the environment. Low-levels of copper are essential for maintaining good health.

Harpoon Granular will be applied at a treatment concentration of 1 ppm copper. The United States Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Health have an action level for copper of 1.3 ppm which, if exceeded, triggers public



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water supplies to take steps to control corrosion within their distribution systems. If low-levels of copper are found in the drinking water, the Cayuga County Health Department does not expect any health impacts from drinking the municipal water.

### **3. Will the copper level in the drinking water be monitored?**

Drinking water served to the Village of Aurora and Wells College comes from Cayuga Lake. The drinking water will be monitored for copper after treatment.

Results of the water sampling will be posted regularly on the Cayuga County Health Department website at the following link:

<https://www.cayugacounty.us/1540/Eradication-Project-in-Aurora>

### **4. How can I find out when the Harpoon Granular is being applied?**

The United States Army Corps of Engineers is planning to apply the chemical likely during the weeks of July 20 or August 10, 2020.

### **5. If I draw my water directly from the lake, will my water be safe to drink during the application of Harpoon Granular?**

Regardless of whether Harpoon Granular is applied to areas of Cayuga Lake, the New York State Department of Health advises that people should never drink untreated surface water (water that is drawn from the lake, at any depth) under any circumstances. Untreated surface water might contain bacteria, parasites, viruses, and harmful algal blooms. These contaminants can cause symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. Young children, pregnant women, older adults and people with health issues are at higher risk from symptoms associated with these contaminants.

### **6. Can the treated water be used to water my lawn, flowers, garden plants, and crops?**

The Harpoon Granular label does not restrict the use of treated water for watering lawns, flowers, and garden plants, or for irrigating crops.

### **7. How long and how frequently will the Harpoon Granular be applied?**

It is anticipated that the Harpoon Granular will only be applied once this summer.

### **8. Where can I find out more about Copper?**

For more information regarding copper when used for an aquatic herbicide, please see the following links:

- <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/plants/factsheets/CopperFactsheet.pdf>
- <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts132.pdf>



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### For questions regarding Hydrilla in Cayuga Lake:

- Please contact the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (FL- PRISM) at 315-781-4385 or check out their website: <http://fingerlakesinvasives.org/>

### For questions regarding the pesticide application:

- Please contact the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Region 7 Pesticide Office at 315-426-7400

### For questions regarding public health:

- Please contact the Cayuga County Health Department at 315-253-1560 <https://www.cayugacounty.us/1540/Eradication-Project-in-Aurora>

### To find out how you, your family, community group or school can help look for and report Hydrilla around Cayuga Lake:

- Please contact the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network at [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org).
  - More information is available at [stophydrilla.org](http://stophydrilla.org)