

Sutton, Kaitlyn

From: Gary <lufriug@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2019 7:39 AM
To: Sutton, Kaitlyn
Cc: info@bullsugar.org
Subject: Triennial Review of Florida's Water Quality Standards
Attachments: MRI Scan Gary Stroke marked 24JUL18.jpg

Dear FDEP Official,

I and my wife have been living in Cape Coral FL since 2005 when I retired. We built a new house on the North Spreader canal system (Raker Canal) in 2008. I have been an active fisherman in Charlotte Harbor for over 13 years often going out 2 or 3 times a week. Great memories I can show & tell ya but something happened to me in July 2018. I had a stroke and as you can imagine, my life has changed. The following is my opinion as to how this could happen to me.

As you know, the Red Tide/Algae Blooms had reached their peak that summer of 2018 in SW Florida. Not only fish and crustaceans but birds, reptiles and mammals were dying by the 100's and some say by the 1,000's every day. Fishing for my favorite Red Drum stopped. The Snook were gone. The water everywhere was dark and loaded with algae particles. While the Raker Canal had minimal algae floating on top, the stench from the water was overwhelming. I totally stopped going out on my boat but I live on the canal. So going outside was not pleasant. We would cough and sneeze often. On Sunday 22 July 2018, I spent all morning and afternoon outdoors in our patio next to our boat dock cooking pork ribs for my family. It was a hot day but being of Cuban/Norwegian descent the heat never seemed to bother me. I did note that the smell from the canal was strong but I kept at it. Dinner was a success. Getting ready for bed that evening I started sneezing violently and uncontrollably. This lasted 10-15 minutes. I was over 70 years old at that time and it was difficult on me physically as I have a history of Afib and mildly high blood pressure. I managed to calm down and got to bed. As far as I can remember it was a normal sleep. The next day I felt ok in the morning and early afternoon. Took my wife to an early dinner at our local Mexican restaurant and after a light dinner started to depart the restaurant. As we were going outside I noted a blurry flash in my vision. Walking to our vehicle I noted blurry vision, especially to details like signage and the fingers of my hand. I had no alcohol that day so it wasn't that. I asked my wife to drive us home thinking I would fully recover my vision. It did not recover after an hour so we drove to the hospital emergency room. After several tests it was determined that I had a stroke in the area of the brain that affects vision. I have uploaded an image of my brain that highlights the affected area. I have partially recovered but I will never be the same again. I haven't been fishing since then.

That's my story and the medical events are fully documented if additional data is needed. I believe this medical event was directly caused by airborne cyanobacterial bloom exposure. Please adopt the 2016 EPA draft recommended water quality criteria of 4 micrograms per liter for microcystin and 8 micrograms per liter for cylindrospermopsin to best protect recreational users and restore Florida's imperiled waters.

Thank you for your time and your understanding. I wish you all success in your efforts to restore our environment.

Sincerely,
Gary Lufriu