



## Red Tide Monitoring Program Seeks Volunteers

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Great Bay Coast Watch

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DURHAM, N.H. - The Great Bay Coast Watch is looking for people interested in assisting with an ongoing early warning red tide monitoring project. Supported by the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and N.H. Sea Grant, the volunteer members of the Watch have been monitoring water quality in the Great Bay Estuary for over 20 years.

Harmful algal blooms, more commonly known as red tides, are caused by the presence of small toxin-producing marine algae. When eaten by filter-feeding shellfish such as clams and mussels, these algae can move up the food chain and cause illnesses in humans.

Since 1999, volunteers have been monitoring five coastal sites weekly from April through October, acting as an early warning system for the presence of these toxic cells in coastal waters. New volunteers will work as part of an experienced team, monitoring water quality and collecting phytoplankton samples weekly using simple methods and field microscopes.

No experience is necessary. Volunteers should be comfortable working outdoors and be able to commit to a prescheduled weekly sampling schedule.

"There is evidence that red tide events have been increasing both in scope and intensity in all coastal states around the country over the past several years," says project coordinator Candace Dolan. "Our monitoring effort is designed to record baseline information on the conditions existing around an event and act as an early warning system to the presence of problem algae."

To volunteer or for more information, please contact Candace Dolan at 603-828-4701 or [candace.dolan@unh.edu](mailto:candace.dolan@unh.edu).

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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