



# Southeast Phytoplankton Monitoring Network

Promoting a better understanding of Harmful Algal Blooms by way of Volunteer Monitoring

Partnering With:



## Reporting a Bloom:

If you and your group think that your monitoring site may have a phytoplankton bloom, please contact the Southeast Phytoplankton Monitoring Network (SEPMN) staff *immediately* via phone and/or email. Make as many observations as you can about the site: weather conditions, water coloration, tides, local flora and fauna, and/or any organism mortality. Record these observations on your data sheet. If you have a camera, we would love pictures of your site during a phytoplankton bloom. Please do not handle/touch any dead organisms found at your site.

Depending on the phytoplankton species, we will let you know if we need a live or preserved sample shipped back to our lab. Make sure you label your samples with the location, date, and time of collection. Please keep all your receipts pertaining to the purchase of shipping materials and fees; we will reimburse you for all your expenses. Contact us before shipping; we will provide you with mailing information so that the shipment does not cost you any money.

## Preserved Samples:

When preserving a sample, please do not use the plankton bottles that were provided for you to avoid staining and contamination of future samples. Transfer the sample from the plankton bottle into a clean plastic or glass jar, vial, or bottle. Next, add Lugol's solution to the sample for a 1% - 2% dilution (for example, add 1 milliliter of Lugol's to 50 milliliters of the plankton sample). Mix gently once or twice; your preserved sample should resemble tea. Place the preserved sample in a zip lock bag, pack the sample into a padded envelop or box and ship it to us via Federal Express Priority.

## Live Sample:

If we need a live sample, it is importantly it is shipped immediately after collection (most mailings with take 24 hours, which is the average time a plankton sample with survive outside their normal environment). To collect a live sample, just take a direct water sample with a clean container with a cap. You do not need to perform a plankton tow. If we think the sample has the potential to be toxic, we may request a 2-liter sample. A live sample needs to be shipped in a small cooler with packing ice (blue ice or frozen water/soda bottles). Place the packing ice on the bottom of the cooler. Put a small buffer or space between the ice and the sample (bubble wrap, peanuts, or newspaper). Ship the sample back to us via Federal Express Priority.

***SEPMN is especially interested in these three potentially toxic genera:***



***Pseudo-nitzschia***



***Prorocentrum lima***



***Dinophysis***