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Grand Lake Sickens Celina Man, Kills Family Pet

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CELINA, Ohio -- Doctors said they believe this is the first case of human illness that has been caused by the toxins in Grand Lake St. Marys.

The Jenkins family said their story should send a strong message that now is the time to do something to fix the problem.

The Jenkins family said they lost their beloved pet, and their husband and father is so ill that he was hospitalized for days with partial numbness and blindness.

As he faces a long recovery, the Jenkins family shared their story with News Center 7 and what they feel needs to happen next to Grand Lake.

Through tears, Laura Jenkins told her family's story about the last month. She said a few weeks ago, their family dog, a black lab named Casey did something quite normal and went for a swim in Grand Lake.

She said he loved the water. Laura said Casey came back to their house covered in blue-green algae.

It was a busy day for the family, so Dan Jenkins immediately gave Casey a bath. He grabbed the hose and a bottle of Dawn soap and went to work.

Laura said a couple of days passed, and Casey and Dan did not feel well. She said she could tell the dog was not feeling good and Dan was showing symptoms of the flu.

Dan and Casey became very sick, so Dan was taken to a local hospital and Casey was taken to the vet. After several days, several test and several doctors, they realized the lake they both loved so much had made them very sick.

Laura said, "I watched my dog die and it's not a good death. Let me tell you it was a horrible, horrible death."

Casey died last Sunday at a Celina veterinarian's office. On the same day, Dan was hospitalized in St. Marys. Doctors said they could not figure out what was wrong with him.

Some thought maybe it was a stroke or a heart attack. However, an infectious disease specialist pieced together the puzzle and determined that was only one cause.

Dan became sick because the toxins in Grand Lake got on him when he gave Casey the bath.

Dan has returned home, but is still not feeling well. He is having trouble moving his left arm and leg. His vision in his left eye is a little hazy.

Dan and Laura Jenkins said their story should be the spark that starts a fix for Grand Lake before someone else has to deal with the same illness.

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland is expected to visit Grand Lake at 11:30 a.m. Friday. He is scheduled to appear at the lake campus of Wright State University.

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