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## Prominent city lakes fail water safety test

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Three lakes in Beijing were seriously polluted in October, the Beijing municipal water resources bureau website said on Nov 12.

Water quality in Chaoyang Park Lake, Honglingjin Lake and Lianhuachi Lake was revealed to be class V1, meaning the water is completely unusable. The lakes do not form part of the city's drinking water supply.

"The pollution is mainly from domestic sewage," said Ma Jun, director of a green NGO-Institute of the Public and Environmental Affairs in Beijing which has released a China water pollution map annually since 2006.

He said the water in Chaoyang Park Lake and Honglingjin Lake comes from the Liangma River.

Ma said the river picks up domestic sewage before it reaches the lakes. Rain drainage systems and sewers also increase the number of pollutants.

"This kind of pollution is called 'non-point source pollution'," he explained. Pollutants come from non-specific places and enter rivers and lakes with rainwater.

Visitors to parks in east Beijing's business and expat-populated districts said the water pollution in Chaoyang Park is apparent.

"I saw waste floating on Chaoyang Park lake and the water is almost black," Yang Xing, a 25-year-old PR company employee, said about her visit in August.

Despite the pollution, hiring a boat remains a popular activity on the lake.

"People don't seem to care about the water quality," Shi Yu, a postgraduate student and frequent visitor to Chaoyang Park Lake, told METRO yesterday.

Chaoyang Park Lake has been cleaned sporadically by the Beijing municipal government since the early 1990s, but the pollution always returns.

"The most significant reason is water shortage," Ma said.

He said water in Beijing is scarce and its natural cycle is slow.

"Saving water in Beijing is very important," Ma said.

Beijing will hold a hearing on water prices this year, intended to raise public awareness about limited water resources.

Water in six lakes, including Tuanjie Lake, Bayi Lake and Kunming Lake in Haidian district was said to be safe to drink, the bureau said.

City rivers like Liangma River and Qinghe River were reported as more polluted than suburban rivers.

Water in Miyun Reservoir, a major source of Beijing drinking water, was said to be safe for consumption. But water in Guanting Reservoir can only be used for industrial purposes.

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