

What YOU Can Do to Keep Our Lake Healthy



Gardening & Lawns

Growing a lush green lawn, beautiful flowers and hearty vegetables are gardening goals and applying pesticides and fertilizers are commonly used to achieve them. Unfortunately these chemicals can wind up in our lake and cause havoc with the aquatic environment, causing algal blooms and fish kills. Here are a few tips that will help minimize the impact:

- Avoid using fertilizer, if you must fertilize September is the best time. Use a slow release fertilizer.
- Don't fertilize in the Spring until you have mowed the lawn 3 times (again September is better!)
- More is not better! Avoid "step programs" of chemical applications.
- Mow high and leave lawn clippings, they help improve the lawns quality and your less likely to need fertilizer.
- Don't apply fertilizer when rain is predicted.
- Hand pick weeds when possible rather than treating them with chemicals.
- Sweep up anything on the pavement so that it doesn't get washed in the storm drains—including chemicals, yard debris and leaves.
- Sweep, don't hose the driveway, to prevent washing debris into stormdrains.
- **Consider using organic fertilizer** such as bone meal, blood meal, compost or organic blends.
- Spread a thick layer of mulch in gardens (except for heat loving veggies like tomatoes).
- If there's a drought, consider letting your lawn go dormant, it will come back in the fall.
- Use pulverized limestone to improve soil pH
- Grow native plants—they have adapted to our geography, hydrology and climate!



Watering

Conserving water can reduce the potential of washing contaminants into the lake. Here are some tips:

- Established lawns only need one inch of water per week, including rainfall.
- Adjust sprinklers so they don't water paved areas.
- Don't water in the heat of the day, water early morning or evening.
- Consider slow watering techniques, like drip irrigation or soaker hoses.



Dog Waste

Bacteria and other parasites in pet waste can survive for long periods on the ground. When it rains these pollutants can be washed into the lake.

- **BRING IT**—Always have a plastic bag with you when walking your dog.



- **BAG IT**—Use the bag as a glove to pick up waste.
- **DISPOSE IT**—Properly dispose of waste by flushing it down the toilet or putting it in the trash can. **Never throw into a storm drain!**

Read the Labels

Use phosphate-free or low-phosphate (less than 1%) automatic dishwashing detergents. Gel detergents tend to have less phosphorus than power detergents. Consider reducing the number of products you use that contain hazardous ingredients.



Maintain your Septic System

Pump your tank as necessary (every 3 to 5 years depending on usage). Don't dispose of hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.

Care for your Car

The best way to minimize the effect washing your car has on the lake is to take it to the car wash...but if you decide to wash it at home:

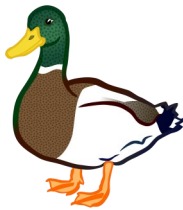
- Use biodegradable, phosphate-free cleaners only.
- Minimize water usage. Use a hose with flow restriction to minimize water volume and runoff.
- Wash on an absorbent area such as gravel, or grass, a substantial distance away from the lake. This can filter water before it enters the lake.



Maintain your vehicle, leaky fluids from your car can be washed into the storm drains every time it rains.

Don't Feed the Ducks!

Eating human food rather than their natural diet leads to malnutrition and serious health issues for ducks. Poor nutrition can cause metabolic bone disease, "angel wing" which can impact flight, liver disease, and cardiovascular issues. Diseases that can eliminate duck populations are caused by artificial feeding including Avian Botulism and Duck Virus Enteritis.



Feeding the ducks can lead to an increase in their numbers and cause a host of problems in the aquatic habitat. Feces generated increase carbon, phosphorus and nitrogen in the water. Artificially fed ducks emit a parasite that causes a condition in humans called Swimmer's itch. The uneaten food can attract rats, racoons and other wildlife that can carry and transmit to disease.



Compost Your Leaves & Yard Waste

Blowing leaves and yard waste into the lake can increase sedimentation. Rotting leaves can also decrease the oxygen levels and impact fish and aquatic animals. Use them as compost or dispose of properly.

Plant a Rain Garden

Consider planting a garden with native plants along your driveway or road to trap stormwater pollution.



Keep Beach Sand from Washing into the Lake

Replenishing sand on your beach may seem like a great idea, but it can contribute to the deterioration of the lake. Like most soils, sand contains contaminants like phosphorus that "fertilize" the lake when sand is washed in when it rains. This reduces water clarity and can cause algae.

Purchase Items that Aid the Environment from the Town of Lunenburg



System Rain Barrels \$56.00

55 Gallon Capacity

Capture Rain and help conserve water!

Earth Machine Compost Bin \$43.00

Holds 80 gallons - ***Create your own Mulch Naturally—(keep compost area away from the lake)***



Kitchen Compost Bucket \$5.00

Holds 1.85 gallons, mess-free food scrap collection, dishwasher safe

\$80 for both the system and compost bin!



For more information contact the Dept. of Public Works
978 582-4160

Flyer created by the HHL Weed Mitigation Committee