



Lake-friendly Yard Maintenance

Managing waste on lakefront property

Lake friendly living
means using lakeshore
BEST MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES

BMP

Lake-friendly Yard
Maintenance

STANDARDS

Recreation Area

- No pet waste accumulation
- No solid waste scattered (trash)
- No pesticide, fertilizer, or unfiltered runoff to the lake

LAKE BENEFITS

Making conscious decisions about managing your land and your waste prevents unexpected and unintended pollution to adjacent lakes, streams, and wetlands. By following simple guidelines you can protect water quality for future generations to enjoy.

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Description: Simple yard maintenance practices that can help to keep lake waters safe for people, pets, and wildlife use.

Purpose: To reduce or eliminate pollutants in runoff.

General Best Practices:

Lawn and Garden Watering.

Soils, yard wastes, over watering, and garden chemicals become part of the runoff mix that winds its way through streets, gutters, and storm drains and into the lake. For example, poorly functioning sprinklers and over watering wastes water and can increase the amount of pollutants flowing into storm drains. Do not over-water. Conserve water by using irrigation practices such as drip irrigation, soaker hoses, or micro-spray systems. Avoid watering onto paved surfaces or areas that drain into storm drains or the lake.

Mowing and Natural Vegetation Zones. You can lessen the amount of fertilizer, fuel, and energy a site requires by reducing the amount of lawn and allowing native vegetation to grow. Equally important, creating or maintaining natural vegetation zones around streams, wetlands, and other sensitive areas will help intercept runoff, as well as infiltrate, filter and treat runoff. The Vermont DEC recommends a minimum **50 foot width** of natural vegetation on most streams, rivers, and wetlands, and a 100 foot width on lakes.

Plant Selection. Lessen lawn area by planting gardens or use low growing native sedges to mimic lawn. Selecting native plants and grasses lessens the need for wa-



Exemplary water quality and lakeshore habitat provides Vermonters with recreational opportunities like fishing, bird watching, and swimming.

Source: www.mychampplain.net

tering and pesticides as they are typically more drought tolerant and pest resistant.

Fertilizer Application. Fertilizers applied to lawns and landscaped areas can contaminate ground and surface water, and harm beneficial insects. Before applying fertilizer you should test your soil to determine the appropriate type and quantity of fertilizer to use by obtaining UVM's home grounds soil test (http://pss.uvm.edu/ag_testing/) for \$14. Most Vermont lawns don't need fertilizer at all. Fertilizers and other chemicals



Vermont citizen scientists have been monitoring phosphorus in lakes for over 30 years.

should be stored in a covered area to prevent contaminated runoff. In addition, phosphorus, a chemical in most fertilizers, is one of the leading causes of diminished water quality in Vermont lakes. Several organi-

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zations have been promoting the “Don’t ‘P’ on your Lawn” campaign, which informs landowners of the harmful effects excessive phosphorus has on the environment. For more information visit this site: www.lawntolake.org.

Pesticides. Instead of pesticides, use pest management involving physical controls such as barriers or traps, biological controls (e.g. green lacewings that eat aphids), and bacterial insecticides (e.g. *Bacillus thuringiensis* that kill caterpillars). Chemical control should be considered a last resort.



The following are the least harmful: dehydrating dusts (e.g. silica gel or diatomaceous earth), insecticidal soaps, boric acid powder, horticultural oils, and pyrethrin-based insecticides.

If you must use a pesticide, use one that is specifically designed to control your pest and use only as directed. The insect should be listed on the label. Approximately 90% of the insects on your lawn and garden are not harmful.

Dumping toxics into the street, gutter or storm drain is illegal. Household toxics—such as pesticides, cleaners, paints and motor oil—can pollute and poison lakes, streams and rivers if disposed of in storm drains or gutters. Rinse empty pesticide containers and dispose of rinse water per the instructions on the product container. Dispose of empty rinsed containers in the trash.

Automobiles. When washing automobiles use products that will break down more easily and are less toxic to plants. Soap should be used sparingly. Wash your car on a grassy area to infiltrate and treat soapy water. Commercial car washes reuse wash water several times before sending it to a wastewater treatment facility for treatment.

Check your car, boat, motorcycle, and other machinery and equipment for leaks and spills. Make repairs as soon as



possible. Clean up spilled fluids with an absorbent material like kitty litter or sand and dispose of the absorbent material properly. Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids by dumping it down storm drains, on the ground, or into a ditch. Many auto supply stores and gas stations accept used oil.

Pet Waste. Pet waste left on the ground can be carried away by runoff, contributing

bacteria, parasites and viruses to downstream water bodies. Pet waste does not fertilize the ground and can be the cause of significant pollution that presents health risks to adults, children and other pets.

To properly dispose of animal waste, use newspaper, bags, or pooper-scoopers to pick up wastes. Place wrapped pet waste in the trash or unwrapped in a toilet. Never discard pet waste in a storm drain or in the lake.

Yard Scraps. Leaves, grass clippings, and tree trimmings can clog catch basins and storm drains, increasing the risk of flooding. Yard scraps that enter rivers absorb oxygen as they decompose, straining or killing aquatic life. Do not blow or rake leaves into the gutter, storm drain, or street (unless there is an active designated municipal leaf pickup scheduled). Use approved containers for curb side pickup of lawn scraps, do your own composting, or take scraps to a landfill that composts.

Household Cleaners and Other Chemicals. It is important to dispose of cleaners and chemicals in the proper manner. Read the instructions on the container or contact your local transfer station or waste management district. For more information visit: www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/swmdlist.htm.



Source: <http://www.zerowasteusa.com>



Source: www.lifestyle.ca.msn.com