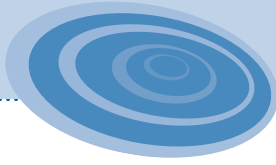


How Can I Limit the Water Quality Impacts of Swimming and Camping?



LAKE HOME & CABIN KIT • SECOND EDITION

Keeping Your Waterfront Healthy

Recreational activities can harm both water quality and shoreline, making the property less inviting, healthy, and useable. Here are guidelines to follow to help maintain the health of lakes or rivers.

Beach Location

If you want a beach area, purchasing lake or river property that already has an established beach and sandy shoreline is the best solution. If you plan to develop a beach, select a site that requires minimal alteration and use guidance from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources area hydrologist (see below). Note that creating a beach on some shorelines may be impossible. Before you consider developing a beach, look for areas along your shoreline with the following features:

- Firm sand with less than six inches of silt.
- No springs or flowing water.
- A gentle slope of less than 10 feet horizontal distance per each foot of vertical drop.
- A location away from significant fish and wildlife habitat, such as wild rice, bulrush, and other protected vegetation.

Swimming

- Insist that swimmers leave the water to use the bathroom.
- Do not use soap or shampoo in the water.

Camping

- Use a latrine whenever possible. If none is available, bury human waste at least 100 feet from the water's edge.
- Dispose of all garbage and litter in trash cans.
- Never wash in the lake or river. Wash dishes, hair, clothes, and yourself at least 100 feet from the water's edge, using biodegradable soap.
- Never dispose of fish guts or other waste in the water, even though it is "biodegradable." It attracts pests and can add unwanted nutrients to the water. Bury fish guts and other biodegradable waste well away from the water's edge.
- Always follow the specific rules or guidelines established for the area in which you are camping, whether it is in the wilderness, state park, or private campgrounds.

Source: University of Minnesota Extension Service Faculty.

Want to know more?

INFORMATION ON THE WEB

www.extension.umn.edu/environment
www.shorelandmanagement.org

WHERE TO CALL

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources,
 651-296-6157 or 1-888-646-6367

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