

Top 12 Things Residents Can Do to Prevent Harmful Algal Blooms

1. If you fertilize your lawn or garden, use no-phosphorus fertilizer to limit nutrient-rich runoff. What makes our lawns green is what makes our lake green!
2. Use only phosphorus-free detergents when you wash your vehicles or power wash your house.
3. Regularly rake leaves and grass clippings out of ditches and away from shorelines. Leaves are a big contributor to organic sediment! It's best to remove them or mulch them into your lawn.
4. Do not feed the geese. Geese droppings contribute to phosphorus and E-coli in the lake. Not to mention, they create a mess for the lifeguards to pick up daily.
5. Put garden fencing at the lake shoreline to prevent the geese from having easy access to lawns and the lake. This encourages them to move on to other locations before they have goslings and shed their feathers.
6. Sweep leaves and grass clippings off of driveways and streets where they can easily wash into the drainage system.
7. Prevent oil and grease from running down pavement toward the drainage ditches.
8. Implement landscaping strategies that increase ground water filtration before water enters the lake. Rain gardens reduce run off, and aerating your lawn helps water penetrate your lawn.
9. Allow natural vegetation to grow at the lake shoreline. Experts recommend having at least a 5-foot deep buffer of vegetation around the lake edge. Shoreline plants act as a filter to stop sediment and they absorb nutrients before they reach the lake. They also help stabilize the shoreline and they block geese from getting on your lawn.
10. Repair erosion within the watershed and minimize activities that leave soil without vegetation.
11. Pick up and dispose of pet waste, a common source of excess nutrients and bacteria.
12. Herbicides should be used sparingly or not at all, as they could be washed downstream and create toxic conditions. Always check lawn care product labels to ensure they are approved for aquatic use or use within a watershed of a lake community.

Let's work together to reduce nutrient and sediment run-off, so we can enjoy our lake this summer!!