

CLEAN@Silver Lake: What Residents Need to Know

Working together for a healthier Silver Lake. CLEAN@Silver Lake is a volunteer-led, Not-for-Profit 501(c)(3) incorporated organization and community resource focused on protecting water quality, preserving lake health, educating residents, coordinating partners and projects, and advocating for science-based solutions.

One Root Cause, Many Visible Symptoms

Many of Silver Lake’s most visible problems are connected by one common driver: **excess phosphorus**. Phosphorus acts like fertilizer in the water. When too much enters the lake, it can fuel harmful algal blooms, dense aquatic weed growth, lower water clarity, reduced oxygen, and long-term water-quality decline.

Simple summary: less phosphorus means fewer HABs, reduced weed growth, better water and recreation, a healthier ecosystem, and stronger protection for Silver Lake as a drinking-water source.

How Phosphorus Enters the Lake

- Leaves and yard waste washed or raked into the lake
- Stormwater and fertilizer runoff from lawns, roads, ditches, and fields
- Eroding streambanks, shorelines, and roadside drainage areas
- Pet waste and improperly maintained sewer or septic systems
- Legacy phosphorus-rich sediment already built up in shallow areas

A Self-Reinforcing Cycle

When excess phosphorus feeds algae and aquatic weeds, those plants eventually decay. Decay returns organic material to the lake and can release more phosphorus, which helps fuel the next cycle of blooms and weed growth. Unless phosphorus inputs are reduced, HABs and weeds are likely to keep returning.

Sources	Phosphorus	Visible Effects	Community Goal
Leaves, runoff, erosion, fertilizer, pet waste, legacy sediment, septic, chemical flares	Excess nutrients enter or recycle within the lake	HABs, dense aquatic weeds, lower clarity, reduced oxygen	Reduce inputs, restore buffers, monitor trends, and protect drinking water

What CLEAN Is Doing

- **Monitoring:** CSLAP water testing and dissolved oxygen testing every two weeks, HAB reporting, and lake-condition tracking.
- **Restoration:** tributary and shoreline buffer plantings, including native trees, shrubs, and perennials to stabilize banks, filter runoff, and keep sediment and phosphorus out of Silver Lake.
- **Prevention:** “Don’t Rake in the Lake,” responsible fertilizer use, stormwater reduction, pet waste management, and Clean–Drain–Dry education at the launch.
- **Invasive species control:** boat steward support, inspection education, disposal tools, Japanese knotweed management, and continued surveillance for new aquatic invaders.
- **Lake management projects:** dredging advocacy, aquatic weed management planning, boat launch and wash station improvements, and a research-scale HAB buoy pilot to test whether ultrasonic technology has a practical role at Silver Lake.

Partnerships Multiply the Impact

- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Silver Lake Watershed Commission

- Wyoming County Water Resources Agency
- Wyoming County Soil & Water Conservation District
- NYSFOLA
- Drinking Water Source Protection Program
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- NYS Parks

Major 2026–2027 Updates

- **New HAB pilot program:** CLEAN is launching a controlled ultrasonic buoy study with continuous monitoring of water conditions, one treatment area, and multiple control areas to evaluate whether ultrasonic technology can help monitor and reduce Harmful Algal Blooms and serve as an effective management tool for Silver Lake.
- **Dredging permitting:** the DEC application was submitted in July 2026, advancing the dredging project into permitting review.
- **Warrior House buffer planting:** volunteers are preparing to plant 170 native trees, shrubs, and perennials in late September or early October to stabilize a tributary, reduce erosion, and filter runoff.
- **Funding snapshot:** 2026 planned revenue is \$13,700, planned expenses are \$16,450, and the current planning gap is \$2,750. Priority uses include plantings, leaf collection, knotweed control, monitoring, education, and operations.
- **Community fundraising:** the Golf Tournament Fundraiser is scheduled for July 17, 2027, with thanks to 2026 Tournament Directors Heidi and Chad Ruchala.
- **State of the Lake:** residents are encouraged to attend the State of the Lake Meeting on June 5, 2027.

What Residents Can Do Now

- **Do not rake or blow leaves into the lake.** Compost, mulch, or use leaf collection instead.
- **Plant or protect native shoreline buffers** to filter runoff before it reaches the water.
- **Use fertilizer responsibly** and avoid applying it near shorelines, ditches, or before rain.
- **Pick up pet waste** so nutrients do not wash into the lake.
- **Maintain sewer and septic systems** to reduce nutrient leakage.
- **Clean, Drain, and Dry boats and equipment** to prevent invasive species from spreading.
- **Report possible HABs:** know it, avoid it, and report it. Keep people and pets away from suspicious blooms.
- **Switch to LED flares** to reduce chemical residues near the lake.
- **Volunteer, donate, and stay informed** through CLEAN updates and community events.

The Big Picture

CLEAN's work connects advocacy, science, practical projects, and everyday resident action. Large projects such as dredging, monitoring, HAB research, boat launch improvements, and watershed restoration matter—but so do small choices made around every property. Every bag of leaves kept out of the lake, every buffer planted, every boat cleaned, every bloom reported, and every neighbor who stays informed helps preserve Silver Lake for future generations.

Stay Connected

Visit **CLEAN@SILVERLAKE.org**, follow CLEAN on Facebook, sign up for email notifications, attend the State of the Lake Meeting on June 5, 2027, volunteer for restoration projects, and help share lake-friendly practices with neighbors.