

Chisago Soil and Water
Conservation District
38814 3rd Avenue
North Branch, MN 55056
651/674-2333



Chisago County
Environmental Services
313 North Main Street Room 243
Center City, MN 55012
651/213-8383

Healthy Lake Habits

As summer gets into full swing we all need to remember some basic “Healthy Lake Habits”

- Sweep grass clippings and fallen leaves off hard surfaces. They contain phosphorus, which is the nutrient that turns lakes green with algae.
- Enjoy a bonfire by the lake? After the fire burns out, remove the ashes to an inland spot. During a rain shower, ashes could wash into the lake adding phosphorus. This can cause algae to grow as well as stimulate the growth of some undesirable aquatic plants.
- Washing your car on a hard surface (concrete or tar) can create a run off problem; the soapy water can flow into a nearby storm drain and end up in nearby lakes and rivers. This can cause nutrients and chemicals to alter the natural habitat of the fish and the vegetation. Wash your car in the yard where the water can soak in or go to a commercial car wash where the soapy water is treated.
- Before you leave the boat landing, remove all aquatic vegetation off the bottom of the boat, boat motor, trailer, or from the livewell. These weeds may become a problem in another lake, taking over and choking out the native vegetation possibly changing the appearance of the lake as well as the water quality for the fish.
- Leave a buffer area of tall grasses or plants between the lawn and the lake. Mowing your lawn all the way down to the lake may make your yard look more manicured; on the flip side it removes the natural buffer to the water. Tall grasses and plants filter out many impurities before they reach the water. The removal of these plants from the yard also opens up space for geese to land and feed. Did you know that one adult goose can produce 14 pounds of droppings each week?
- Simple things like picking up any garbage you may find when you go for a walk, being careful when applying fertilizers and weed killers to your lawn, not spilling gas or oil into the water when filling your boat, and cleaning the weeds off your boat can help to improve the fishing, swimming, wildlife and all around health of the lakes, rivers, and streams that we all love to enjoy throughout Chisago County.

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Summer Fun on the Lake?

Have ever asked yourself...

Why does the lake look so green?

Swimming here isn't as much fun anymore; why doesn't the lake seem very clean.

I used to catch a lot of fish in this lake... why aren't there as many fish here now?



I love to walk by the lake, so much wildlife. This time when I went for my walk...why weren't there as many birds? I did find a lot of garbage...



What are these weeds on my boat motor?

The geese in my yard are making a mess, what can I do about it?

We have included some basic "Healthy Lake Habits" on the reverse side of this sheet. If you have any questions please contact the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District, at 651/674-2333, or the Chisago County Environmental Services Office, at 651/213-8383 for more information!