

Best Practices for Living on a Lake

McKay Lake Community Association

Our McKay Lake community enjoys clean water and air with an abundance of nature surrounding us. Many of us enjoy family time, swimming, fishing, glorious sunsets, dark starry skies, the seasonal changes, and the slower pace. We all have a role in helping to keep it this way.

Especially for seasonal cottagers, time spent at the lake is precious. Please keep excessive noise to a minimum and be aware of how noise travels farther over water. To minimize disruption to wildlife, keep outdoor lighting to a minimum using lights which cast the light downwards wherever possible. Most outdoor solar lights also have switches to turn the light off when not needed.

In order to keep our lake a healthy thriving environment keep in mind that what goes on your property and down your drain eventually finds its way to the lake.

- Use phosphate free soaps and detergents
- Avoid use of harsh cleaners, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers
- Take advantage of the hazardous materials disposal site located next to the Rosewarne Landfill
- Keep your septic system in good working order by having it pumped out and inspected on a regular basis, limiting water use and keeping non degradable items out. Leaking and overloaded systems are a major source of phosphorous and other contaminants which can lead to algae blooms, declining water quality and health of the lake

Shorelines matter. They function as filters to reduce the number of pollutants entering the lake and protect against shoreline erosion, while storing carbon and providing vital habitat for wildlife and fish. Allow native vegetation to grow along the waterfront by not mowing to the shoreline. Plant or allow native plants to grow in this buffer zone.

Boat with care, enjoy the lake. Ensure boats used elsewhere respect the law by having been cleaned, drained, and dried. Remember, we are sharing the lake with the native wildlife, please be alert for loons and their nesting sites, and always operate boats below 10km/hr whenever within thirty meters of the shore. When fishing retrieve any line when possible and do not use lead sinkers. Any bait buckets or live bait should never be emptied in the lake, helping to avoid detrimental invasive species.

Enjoy campfires safely. The status of Forest Fire danger is posted on Fraserburg Road and in the summer months daytime burning is not permitted. The neighbours are close, and the fire department is far.

We can avoid creating nuisance animals by ensuring food is not left outdoors overnight. Be aware of your garbage and recycling pick up date. You can find this at <https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/garbage-and-recycling/find-your-collection-schedule.aspx> As garbage collection may begin at 7:30am, consider animal proof garbage bins.

Resources: Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association - foca.on.ca
Muskoka Watershed Council - muskokawatershed.org
Watersheds Canada - watersheds.ca & loveyourlake@watersheds.ca
Muskoka WaterWeb - muskokawaterweb.ca