

Public Tools to Support Lake Health



Lake Protection Workbook

A Self-Assessment Tool for Shoreline Property Owners



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What is the Lake Protection Workbook?

- A self-assessment tool for shoreline property owners that:
 - Determines how well property management protects the lake
 - Provides concise and practical information about best practices
 - Includes key resources
- Created by the Lake Links Planning Committee using multi-organizational expertise



How Do I Use It?

- Answer the series of questions:
 - General property information
 - How are your actions affecting the lake?
- Calculate your score
- Consider ways you could improve shoreline protection and lessen negative effects on surroundings
- Explore contacts and resources to help you achieve these improvements!



The Nitty Gritty...

Nine Key Topics:

- Lawns and gardens
- Recreation
- Shorelines
- Wetlands
- Wildlife
- Docks and boathouses
- Sewage systems
- Light pollution
- Runoff

Group 1 Questions: Lawn & Gardens

- 1. We don't have a waterfront lawn.**
True = 1 False = 0 Answer: _____
- 2. Approximately, what percentage of our property (excluding buildings) is lawn?**
Less than 25% = 3 Between 25 - 49% = 2 Between 50 - 75% = 1 More than 75% = 0 Answer: _____
- 3. We don't use chemical fertilizers or uncomposted manure on our waterfront property.**
True = 1 False = 0 Answer: _____
- 4. We use natural lawn care methods, including leaving the grass longer to encourage the growth of stronger and deeper roots.**
True = 1 False = 0 Not applicable, we have no lawn = 1 Answer: _____
- 5. We only plant native plants on our property or simply let nature do the planting.**
Native plants are preferred because they are well adapted to our climate and wildlife, usually have deeper roots, and do not pose a threat of becoming invasive.
True = 1 False = 0 Answer: _____
- 6. We check whether any of the plants we select could be an invasive species.**
Check out the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's 'Grow Me Instead' resources.
<https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/grow-me-instead/>
True = 1 False = 0 Not applicable, we don't plant = 1 Answer: _____
- 7. We keep brush and compost piles well away (i.e. 30 meters) from our shoreline.**
Excessive decomposing plants near the shoreline can contribute to nutrient loading in lakes and rivers. The extra nutrients can lead to poor water quality, excessive weed growth and algae blooms.
True = 1 False = 0 Answer: _____
- 8. We try to limit the direct runoff to our lake from our property.**
Runoff from your property can contain pollutants like nutrients and bacteria. You can direct runoff away from the lake by installing rain barrels, rain gardens, soak away pits and reducing lawn area or hardened/paved surfaces. Vegetation, including shoreline buffers, provides good runoff reduction.
True = 1 False = 0 Answer: _____

Record your total Group 1 score here 6

Workbook Results

Score Summary - Enter each of the sub-totals from the numbered question groups to see how well your lakeshore property practices are helping to protect your lake.

Question Group	Total	Score	Ranking	Interpretation
1: Lawns and Gardens		7 - 10	Excellent	Your practices are being managed well and are protective of your lake. Be proud of your dedication and showcase your efforts to visitors.
		4 - 6	Moderate	There is some room for improvement and some practices are negatively affecting your lake.
		0 - 3	Needs Improvement	Prioritize some changes to protect your lake.
2: Recreation		5 - 8	Excellent	You are doing an excellent job to protect your lake while enjoying recreational opportunities.
		3 - 4	Moderate	While you are generally mindful of the impact of your fun on the environment, there are some areas for improvement. See what you can do to maximize lake protection.
		0 - 2	Needs Improvement	Wildlife, water quality and fellow lake users would benefit from changes to your recreational practices.
3: Shorelines		6 - 9	Excellent	Good work, you recognize that a natural shoreline is vitally important to your lake and have taken steps to ensure your impact is minimized.
		3 - 5	Moderate	While your shoreline area is somewhat naturalized, there is room for improvement. Prioritize actions toward enhancing natural features (e.g. removing invasive plants, mowing less) and stopping practices that are harmful.
		0 - 2	Needs Improvement	Your shoreline area should be in a more natural state. Identify some things you can do both in the short-term and the long-term to reestablish the natural ecosystem.
4: Wetlands		4 - 5	Excellent	You protect wetlands. Enjoy and promote these critical natural features.
		2 - 3	Moderate	Look for ways to reduce human influence on the wetlands on or near your property.
		0 - 1	Needs Improvement	Wetlands on your property are being impaired. Make changes to your practices to better care for the wetlands that are needed for good lake health.

How Can I Get a Copy?

Watersheds Canada

- Online
 - watersheds.ca/our-work/resources/publications/
- Print
 - Order online for \$2.00 + shipping

Cataraqui Conservation Website

- cataraquiconservation.ca/pages/lakes



Also Available on CataraqiConservation.ca...

NEW! Lake Reporting Dashboard

- Access lake-specific information about lakes within Cataraqi Conservation's watershed
- Questions:
 - What are the characteristics of the lake?
 - How impacted or vulnerable is the lake?
- What actions can **you** take to combat cumulative impacts that compromise lake health?
- Collecting data over time is critical for monitoring and improving lake health!

Thank You

Questions? Contact Us:

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www.cataraquiconservation.ca/pages/contact

