

How to Live With a Lake

The Municipality of Anchorage is about 2,000 sq. mi. and has over 170 ponds and lakes. These waterbodies are some of Anchorage's premier amenities. Housing and other developments are adjacent to nearly half of them. This handout provides information on good practices for those who live near or recreate on lakes.



◆ Be a steward for your lake and keep an eye on it. Report any issues or concerns on our "Citizen's Reporting" form at anchoragecreeks.org

◆ If you are on a septic system, make sure it is properly and regularly maintained, keep it up to code, and ensure that harmful items don't enter it.

◆ With lakes most often downhill of a surrounding land surface, they become a perfect catchment for a variety of pollutants including yard chemicals, ice melt products, trash, litter, and pet waste runoff. Reduce or eliminate chemicals and make sure trash and pet waste are cleaned up. If you must apply yard or ice melt chemicals, read and follow directions and warnings.

◆ Dispose of vehicle fluids, old paint, and excess household and yard chemicals properly. The Municipal Solid Waste Services (SWS) has several options for recycling paints and collecting hazardous products. See muni.org/departments/sws/pages/default.aspx

◆ If possible, wash your vehicle at a car wash (where water is often recycled and conveyed to the sanitary sewer--not the storm drain system). When washing a vehicle at home, use phosphate-free soap, a hose with a nozzle that can be turned off, work on a level area of grass or gravel, and keep washwater from storm drains which convey it untreated into our creeks and lakes.

◆ Good landscape practices include keeping a natural plant buffer at the shoreline to capture runoff, not planting lawns right up to the water's edge, preventing bank trampling, and never disposing of yard clippings in the lake.

◆ Enjoy the wildlife and waterfowl, but please do not feed--especially ducks and geese. This encourages them to take up residence on your lake, and human food, which is not their natural diet, can be harmful. In addition, large populations of waterfowl create increased nutrient loads from their feces, which cause high bacteria loads and excess aquatic plant blooms.

◆ NEVER introduce non-native vegetation, i.e. aquarium plants, or animals, i.e. fish or turtles, to lakes. Known as invasive species, they typically have no enemies and can decimate existing plant and animal populations. Keep an eye out for these invaders, and report any invasive species to 1-877-INVASIV (468-2748) or www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=invasive.report

◆ Be a respectful recreational user, whether you are swimming, fishing, boating, or flying a float plane. Know and follow rules and regulations; dispose of fishing line, hooks or weights properly; minimize wakes to reduce shoreline erosion; watch for unintentional transport of aquatic plants; and do not allow fuel or oil to spill. Report spills to dec.alaska.gov/spar/spillreport.htm

BE THE GUARDIAN OF YOUR LAKES!



Anchorage Waterways Council is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit dedicated to the health and preservation of our water resources. Its work is funded by memberships, donations, and grants. Follow us on Facebook or at

anchoragecreeks.org

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Two-sided rack card titled "How to Live with a Lake". In January 2015, the card was mailed to over 700 households and businesses adjacent to lakes in the Municipality.