

LAKE DOs and DONTs

Produced By Road B4 Property Owners

How often do you run your dishwasher, do laundry or use cleaning products? Now multiply that by the 234 homes on Bass Lake. Thats a-lot of soap. Up to 90% of all lake life is born, raised and fed within 10-15 metres of shore, this “ribbon of life” is critical to our lake, and that space is critical for wildlife to survive.

The material that each of us received recently, is an excellent source of information for you. I encourage you to refer to it to learn about our lake quality, and what you, as a Bass Lake resident can do to get our lake back to a healthy state and keep it there. One small thing we can do is look at what we put down our drains, and what cleaning detergents we opt to use.

Back in 2010, the Canadian Federal Government passed regulations pertaining to the amount of phosphates allowed in certain products, both manufactured here and imported. Although those limits are set at .5% for most products, excess nutrients still leech into our waterways.

Detergents and soaps contribute to the excess of nutrients entering our waters which can lead to the destruction of our lake. Algae suck up those nutrients and their populations become denser. Phosphates are not only in your cleaning products, sand contains phosphorous, it destroys the natural filters we need for a healthy lake.

So lets use our consumer power for good and choose cleaning products that are certified to reduce their impacts on the environment. ECOLOGO is one Canadian certification that the product is environmentally friendly . <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/Oca-bc.nsf/eng/ca02523.html>
Some products may brand themselves as “natural” by their language or images like pictures of leaves on the label but they may not be good for the environment. Read labels carefully, biodegradable and non-toxic sound like appealing terms, this is not all true:

“Biodegradable” means that the soap will break down in the environment, but it glosses over how long that will take, and what sort of effects the process might have in the meantime. And those effects can be quite detrimental: Phosphorus, a common ingredient in soaps, is like steroids to aquatic plants and algae, leading to overgrown algal blooms and a sharp drop in the oxygen so vital to lake fauna. Soaps can also break the surface tension of water, further lowering oxygen levels. Surfactants in soap can be toxic to lake life, especially tiny invertebrates”.

So, here’s only a few of the numerous products on the market. Take the small step now to look for and purchase environmentally safe products, for the betterment of our waters.

TruEarth <https://www.tru.earth>

Ecoc <https://www.ecos.com>

Eco max <https://eco-max.com>

Nellie’s <https://nelliesclean.com>

Nature Clean <https://natureclean.ca>

Method <https://methodhome.com>

LiveClean <https://ca.live-clean.com>

Norwex :https://shopca.norwex.biz/en_CA/customer/pages/our-story

Attitude: <https://ca.attitudeliving.com/>

Where to purchase: Shop online for shipping, or visit your favourite store, you will find a limited supply of environmentally friendly cleaning products at your local grocery store, Independent and Metro to name two. Canadian Tire, Home Depot, Home Hardware and Costco also carry these products, and more. Both Foodsmiths in Perth and Modern Thymes in Smiths Falls have an excellent selection of products. Both have refillable options, a bonus when saving on packaging. Modern Times sells a laundry detergent, powder form, in bulk, that is friendly to our lake, all you have to do is take in a container!

Terra20 <https://terra20.com> (closest location is at the IKEA mall in Ottawa) is also a great place to find all you need, again with an “eco-bar” where they will refill you container.

If you want to shop online, again consider local: Natural Food Pantry, in person or will ship <https://naturalfoodpantry.ca>

Let's do our part, let's do what we can. Here's a few more important Do's and Don't's

- Do: Maintain a buffer zone of natural vegetation and trees along your shoreline to minimize erosion and assimilate contaminants and nutrients. The ideal shoreline is one you leave alone at its natural state.
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- Do: Ensure your septic systems are compliant, functioning properly and pumped regularly.
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- No soap is a good soap for the lake, so do bathe on land, away from the shore. Adding suds directly to the lake can kill wildlife and create algae blooms.
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- Do: Clean up after your pets
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- Do: Consider using a rain barrel to collect water and minimize run off, plus its great to use on your garden on dry days.

And some Don't's

- Don't use any antibacterial soap, your septic system needs bacteria to break down solids.
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- Don't use sand along the shoreline. Sand contains phosphorous and destroys the natural filters we need for a healthy lake.
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- Don't be wasteful with water.
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- Don't dispose of pharmaceuticals, food waste or chemicals down the drain.
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- Don't sacrifice your trees for a sightline. They absorb the run off, a mature oak can transpire 150,000 litres of water in the growing season. If you want a better view of the lake, trim the lower branches, and leave the higher ones.

“ Treat the Lake Water as if you had to Drink It”

A Few Home Remedies

Homemade Drain Cleaner

- ¼ – ½ cup baking soda
- ¼ cup white vinegar

Sprinkle baking soda down the clogged or smelly drain, and follow that with the vinegar. Let the bubbling mixture sit for an hour or so, then pour boiling hot water down the drain to rinse.

Homemade Dusting Spray

- 1 Tbsp [castile soap](#)
- 15 drops lemon essential oil
- 2 cups water

Combine ingredients in a spray bottle and shake gently to combine. Use as you would any typical dusting spray, either spraying onto a clean cloth and wiping, or spraying on the surface and wiping. (I'd start with the first option, or test a small area of the furniture first).

Homemade Wood Polishing Spray

- ¾ cup [olive oil](#)
- ¼ cup white vinegar
- 30 drops essential oil, optional (I like lemon, orange, or lavender best)

Combine ingredients in a spray bottle and shake vigorously. Spray directly on wood furniture and buff with a clean, dry cloth. Shake before each use.

Homemade Carpet Freshener (With Added Benefits)

In addition to freshening the smell in a room, this combination of ingredients can disinfect, kill fleas and their eggs, and act as a rodent deterrent.

- 2 cups Borax
- 1 cup baking soda
- 10 drops essential oil

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix well. Store in an air-tight container. When you're ready to use, just sprinkle around the carpet and let sit for about half an hour. Vacuum up, and you're ready to go!

Shower Spray

1. Remove the nozzle in a 20 oz spray bottle.

2. Place a funnel over the bottle and add 1 1/2 cups water, 1/4 cup vodka or rubbing alcohol, 1/4 cup hydrogen peroxide, 1 tbsp vinegar, 1 tsp natural liquid dish soap, 10 drops Lemon essential oil, and 10 drops Tea Tree essential oil.

3. Replace nozzle and tighten cap. Shake well

Essential oils with cleaning properties:

The **lavender and tea tree essential oils** both have natural disinfecting properties. Tea tree oil is also antiviral and anti fungal.

Grapefruit, Orange and Lemon essential oils are the best natural degreasers. They can help to remove caked on dirt, grime, or dust on surfaces like a natural goo gone remover. They make excellent cleaning sprays or even a shower spray to help combat soap scum and build-up.

Rosemary and Eucalyptus essential oil are excellent deodorizers. Add a drop or two to diaper pails, trash cans, closets, etc. It helps to neutralize odours and get rid of musty scents.

Orange essential oil works well for degreasing, especially on cutting boards, kitchen appliances, and pots and pans.

Lemongrass essential oil is one of the best deodorizers. Add 3-4 drops to the wash when you're doing laundry to get rid of stinky odours in socks and gym clothes.

