

MAINTAINING LAKES AND PONDS

Nothing is more visible on a property than its lakes, ponds and waterways. Managing these assets can seem to be a daunting and endless task. But if you follow a few simple steps it can be much easier to ensure that these water bodies enhance instead of detract the property's value.

Don't Feed the Beast

The health of a water body is determined largely by the amount of nutrients found in the system. Nutrients act as food for fish, birds, plants and algae. But too much of a nutrient level can create a nuisance. So, limit the nutrients, limit your problems. These simple steps can help:

- Limit the amount of fertilizers used throughout the property
- Know best fertilizer practices for your area
- Educate homeowners that what is poured on the ground can go into the lakes
- Eliminate grass clippings from going into the lakes

Keep the Aliens Out

Exotic and nuisance aquatic plant growth can further unbalance waters. These organisms tend to quickly dominate the areas where they grow, increase sedimentation and interrupt the normal cycles of the lake. These organisms need to be aggressively removed.

- Responsibly use chemical treatments for plant reduction
- Educate homeowners about not "dumping" aquarium plants into the water
- Support a diverse and healthy native population of plants and animals

Keep the Natives Happy

Properly managing a diverse littoral plant community can help alleviate and reduce the problems listed above. Native plants utilize nutrients and keep them from building up in the water. These plants actually compete with each other and help to maintain a better vegetative balance. Native plants will help defend against exotic invaders and support a diverse native population.

- Plant a variety and diversity of plants: shoreline, emergent, lilies, and submersed
- Create "clumps" of plants, not just a single fringe
- Educate residents of the importance of these plants, and why they are needed



Involve the Community

Educating and involving the residents in the community can help to eliminate many of the complaints that will occur. The more the residents know, the less they have to ask. However, make sure residents are being educated by experts, not just finding random "online" information.

The most important thing you can do for your water bodies is to have a multi-faceted and committed effort to managing the waters of your properties. There are very few "quick" fixes, but with dedication and time you will have results in a water body that both you and the residents can take pride in.

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