

## LAKESMART HOME OWNER SURVEY

**Thank you for helping protect the lake!** This Survey will help you gauge how well your home does that. As you'll see, most questions focus on managing stormwater. Your answers will help us help you to protect lake water quality, wildlife habitat, and the value of your home. The survey may also lead you to see your lakeside home in an entirely new way.



When you return the Survey, we'll call you to schedule an appointment with a member of our LakeSmart Team. She or he will walk your property with you and can suggest ways to protect the lake. What you do after that is completely up to you; LakeSmart is free, non-regulatory and carries no obligations. Did you know that lakes are so important to Maine that we have special laws to protect them? LakeSmart also helps you stay on the good side of those!

Please return your completed survey to:

*(Insert name, address and email here)*

### **Part 1 Home Owner Information**

Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Property Information:**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Year Built: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Years Owned: \_\_\_\_\_

Used Year Round or Seasonally? (circle)

Road Association Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **General Questions:**

Do you have outside pets? Yes/No

Do you have a schedule for septic tank pumping with your service provider? Yes/No

When was it last pumped?

Do you use herbicides and pesticides? Yes/No

If so, how frequently?

Do you use fertilizer? Yes/No

If so, how frequently?

Do you set the mower bar on high, medium or low when mowing your lawn?

If you have a free-standing deck between the home and water, when was it built?

## **Part 2 Driveway and Parking Area**

Driveways and parking areas can be a large source of lake pollution because they shed water. This section will help you judge the effect these areas may have on lake water.	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>?</b>
1. Are driveway and parking areas well-defined?			
2. Are they appropriate in size to your needs?			
3. Is the surface stable? (If not, you will see gravel washed off to the sides.)			
4. Is the surface free of channels dug by stormwater runoff?			
5. Do you have vegetation between the parking/ driveway areas and the lake that can stop and absorb any stormwater runoff from these surfaces?			

## **Part 3 Structures and Septic System**

You are looking for what happens to stormwater that falls from roofs. This section also looks at septic system maintenance and the effect of the system on groundwater.	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>?</b>
1. Walk around each building and look at the ground under the dripline. Is this area free of channels (narrow trenches) below the driplines? If you have more than one building, combine results and judge whether it is Y,N, or Don't know.			
2. Dripline stormwater can channel downslope toward the lake. Look closely at downslope areas. Is your site free of stormwater channels from this source?			
3. Is the surface of the leach field clear of trees and woody shrubs? (Tree roots can damage septic system pipes and cause expensive repairs.) If your leach field is raised above the normal level of the ground, give yourself a Yes.			
4. If trees border the leach field, have you had your service provider examine the perforated pipes for damage? (Roots extend as far outward as branches.)			
5. Is the surface of the leach field normally dry and solid underfoot?			
6. Septic malfunction causes an "off" smell. Does your yard smell OK?			
7. Septic malfunction adds nutrients to groundwater, causing plants downstream to grow vigorously. Are downstream plants the same size and color as others?			
8. Do you clean up after your outside pet or pets? (No pets equals a Yes)			

## **Part 4 Yard, Recreation Areas and Footpaths**

This is where you, your family, and friends spend time together. The point here is to balance recreation needs with lake protections. (Hint: lakes like less lawn.)	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>?</b>
1. Walk all around the area surrounding your home - places where you and your family spend time when not on or in the lake - and examine the ground. Is all soil covered by vegetation, pine needles, leaf litter, crushed rock, or mulch?			
2. Is your lawn size appropriate to your recreational and social uses?			
3. Are your recreation areas well-defined?			
4. Do you let pine needles and leaf litter accumulate in places you do not use for socializing, canoe and kayak storage, or games?			

5. If you have gardens, do you cover the bare soil between plants with mulch?			
6. Is the land surface rough and uneven? (Not smooth)			
7. Are your paths covered with mulch, crushed rock, or spaced pavers?			
8. Do your paths prevent stormwater from running along them into the lake?			
9. Are your paths curved?			
10. Are your paths less than 6 feet wide?			

### **Part 5 Buffer and Water Access**

The land along the shore is vital for protecting water quality. A “Shoreline Buffer” is a strip of vegetation running the length of the shore that shields the lake from our activities on land. The division between yard and buffer area varies from home to home. Design your own buffer by plotting out in your mind a “Lake protection strip” separate from the rest of your land, and answer these questions about that area.	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>?</b>
1. Is there a healthy strip of vegetation - - ground covers, plants, woody shrubs, and trees - - running along the length of your shoreline?			
2. Do you have three layers of vegetation in this strip? (Count one layer for each of the following: <i>ground covers</i> like wintergreen or vinca; <i>plants</i> like ferns, lilies, or hosta; <i>shrubs</i> ; and <i>trees</i> . <i>Pine needles/leaf litter</i> count as a layer, so you could have up to 5 layers. This question asks, “Do you have at least 3?”)			
3. Is this vegetated strip at least 10 feet deep? (Measure distance horizontally from the high water line or inland edge of shoreline rocks away from the lake.)			
4. Do you allow pine needles and leaf litter to accumulate in the buffer strip?			
5. Is the buffer vegetation free of invasive plants like Japanese barberry or purple loosestrife?			
6. Is the land surface rough and uneven? Is there an ice berm along the shore?			
7. Does the path to your dock or swimming access keep stormwater from running along it and into the lake?			
8. Is the way (steps, stones, ladder) you get in and out of the water stable so that it doesn’t carry stormwater and soil into the lake?			
9. Is the shoreline stable? (Walk out to the end of your dock and look back at the shoreline to either side. If the bank is slumping or undercut by wave action, it is not stable. Also, if a tree’s roots have been weakened by waves, the tree will lean toward the water - this is a sign of instability also)			
10. If concrete or stones have been applied to the shoreline to stabilize it, are they covered with vegetation? (If no reinforcement has been added, answer is Yes)			

<b>Add the total for each column (Yes, No, or?) 22 Yeses = a Hi Lake IQ!</b>			
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