LakeSmart is about taking simple actions to protect your lake. There are many Best Management Practices (BMPs) you can put in place that will “slow the flow” and give rainwater a chance to soak into the ground (infiltrate) before reaching the lake. Some BMPs can be done in an afternoon, some might take years, but all are investments in long-term lake health.

**BEEFY BUFFERS**

While there are many BMPs that will help reduce your property’s contributions of phosphorus into the lake, planting deep swaths of native vegetation along the shoreline, beside paths and on the downhill side of driveways and parking areas is one of the easiest ways to infiltrate runoff and “slow the flow.” Buffers with many tiers of vegetation (duff: needles and leaves), ground cover, shrubs, mid-story trees and canopy trees) provide the most protection, and a buffer can beautifully frame your story trees and canopy trees. A buffer can trap more rain, and the deep roots of native plants help absorb rainwater and extract phosphorus.

**RAIN GARDENS**

LakeSmart is about taking simple actions to protect your lake. Some BMPs can be done in an afternoon, so soak into the ground (infiltrate) before reaching the lake. While there are many BMPs that will help reduce your property’s contributions of phosphorus into the lake, planting deep swaths of native vegetation along the shoreline, beside paths and on the downhill side of driveways and parking areas is one of the easiest ways to infiltrate runoff and “slow the flow.” Buffers with many tiers of vegetation (duff: needles and leaves), ground cover, shrubs, mid-story trees and canopy trees) provide the most protection, and a buffer can beautifully frame your story trees and canopy trees. A buffer can trap more rain, and the deep roots of native plants help absorb rainwater and extract phosphorus.

**Erosion Control Mulch**

Special mulch to cover built along house lakesmart.org/BMPs - slow the flow. This can be added to your property to slow down and absorb water, creating a water treatment system that can help protect your lake. You can also leave mow areas with beautiful rooted vegetation. When you want to mow an area, it’s best to mow strips of native vegetation and core strips that are wide enough to get the same results. This will help maximize the vegetation, will have far benefits for lakes at the bottom of the watershed. Forest and farm management throughout the watershed will affect water quality.

**Infiltration Trenches**

This can be added to your property to slow down and absorb water, creating a water treatment system that can help protect your lake. You can also leave mow areas with beautiful rooted vegetation. When you want to mow an area, it’s best to mow strips of native vegetation and core strips that are wide enough to get the same results. This will help maximize the vegetation, will have far benefits for lakes at the bottom of the watershed. Forest and farm management throughout the watershed will affect water quality.

**Infiltration Steps**

Paths or roads to divert rain into rain gardens or other vegetated areas. Infiltration steps will trap more rain, and the deep roots of native plants help absorb rainwater and extract phosphorus.

**Built Along House Lakesmart.org/BMPs - Slow the Flow**

If you will, then LakeSmart is for you!

**Look inside for tips and the LakeSmart poster.**

Being LakeSmart preserves water quality and property values while protecting wildlife habitat and the recreational values of Maine lakes.
Maintain a healthy septic with regular pumping and with use matched to capacity.

Cover outside heating oil tanks to protect from falling ice and snow.

Maintain roads so they are crowned and stable, with no erosion on the shoulders.

Define parking areas and reduce size to what you use on a regular basis.

Keep ditches functional by regularly removing vegetation and debris.

Direct roof runoff to a rain garden, infiltration trench or vegetated area.

Spread erosion control mulch on areas of bare soil.

Keep leach field free of woody plant growth.

Define paths to the lake, making them winding and stable.

Consider eliminating lawn altogether, and let your yard go wild!

Plant vegetative buffers along paths and driveway areas to reduce runoff.

Pick up pet waste and place in trash.

Leave layers of needles and fallen leaves (duff) as natural mulch.

Define parking areas and reduce size to what you use on a regular basis.

Leave lakeside vegetation and rocks in place to stabilize the shoreline.

Retain canopy trees, especially those that drop leaves into the lake in the fall.

Maintain a deep multi-tiered shoreline buffer of native vegetation.

This typical older camp, sited closer to the lake than current regulations allow, protects the lake when all the standards listed above are met.

Need more information? Visit www.lakesmart.org to learn more about the standards described above, and how you can be part of the LakeSmart solution.