Perkins Pond Protective Association

The Perkins Ponder

Fall, 2001

Minutes from Fall 2001 PPPA Meeting

John and Suzanne McMahon hosted the Perkins Pond Protective Association meeting on August 25, 2001. Attendees represented about 20 families. This newsletter reports on the discussions and decisions that took place at that meeting.

Milfoil and Weed Watching

Tamar Sanders reported on the milfoil problem at Lake Sunapee and measures we can take to keep it out of Perkins Pond. Tamar has researched water quality issues and is helping to organize a "Weed Watcher" group for Perkins Pond. She provided the NH DES information in this mailing.

Once introduced, milfoil quickly invades and clogs a lake, making it difficult to swim or boat and reducing land values. It spreads primarily on boats.

Milfoil has recently been found in Lake Sunapee. The Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA) is overseeing an aggressive effort to contain or eradicate the weeds. This situation underscores the critical need for a program to monitor and protect Perkins Pond.

If milfoil is suspected, do not pull it or stir it up. Clip a piece, put it in a baggie, and take it to LSPA for identification (at 72 Main Street, Sunapee, 763-2210, www.lakesunapee.org).

The "Weed Watchers" program seeks to prevent the spread of problem weeds by identifying them early. Weed Watcher volunteers learn to recognize milfoil and other problem plants and monitor for them. Perkins Pond Weed Watchers and other preventive programs will be organized in the coming months.

For further information or to volunteer as a Weed Watcher , contact Tamar Sanders at 603-763-9255 or email: tamarsanders@aol.com

Water Quality

John McMahon reported on preliminary results of this year's water quality testing. Phosphorous has been increasing in the water. Phosphorous causes the growth of algae, which could eventually fill in the pond. Humans introduce phosphorous by several means including fertilizing lawns and failing sewers.

The water testing at Perkins Pond is part of the NH Dept of Environmental Services (DES) Volunteer Lake Assessment Program. NH DES published guidelines on how to test the water, and the state sends out a representative to demonstrate proper methods. Gary Szalucka has been testing the water quality monthly throughout the summer.

Perkins Pond water quality reports are now available on the web, dating back to 1987 when sampling began. This site contains information about the Volunteer Lake Assessment Program, with reports and charts for all participating lakes:

http://www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/vlap/

At the site, select "Annual VLAP Lake Reports" and then select "Perkins Pond"

2002 Dates

Spring Meeting: June 8 at the Mumford's.
Water Carnival: tentative date July 17.

Weed Wacker

Gary showed the underwater mower owned by the Association. It is powered by a rechargeable battery pack. PPPA dues-paying members can borrow the mower to clean out weeds near shore. It should not be used on possible problem plants such as milfoil.

Boat Landing

Chris Domian reported that as a result of our request, the state removed the rusted broken grate from the boat landing. The current plan is not to replace it because the landing is so flat and it seems not to be needed.

Sewer Project

The town of Sunapee will not put the Perkins Pond sewer project on the ballot again unless requested to by a petition. The petition requires relatively few signatures. The meeting debated whether the Association would actively seek a vote for spring, 2002.

Although initial opinion was divided, factors brought out in discussion led to a unanimous vote in favor of getting the issue on the next ballot. These factors included:

- Mountain View Lake is likely to press for sewers if Perkins Pond does not go on the next ballot. Mountain View would be a smaller project and have a better chance of passing, thus delaying further any likelihood of approval for Perkins Pond sewers.
- The proposal that failed several times assumed a route through the Jennings property, the potential site for Sunapee Springs bottled water company. However, an alternate route up North Road has also been studied and appears feasible.

The Association unanimously accepted a motion, by Robert Bradley, to put Perkins Pond sewers on the Sunapee ballot in whichever form the officers of our Association deem to be the best: either along North Road or through the Jennings property.

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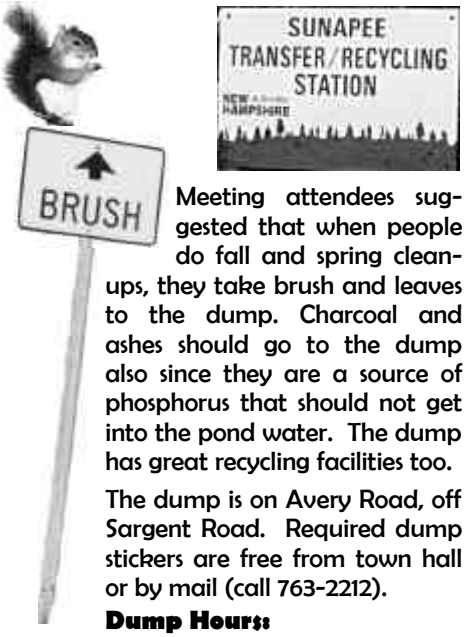
Water Carnival

The water carnival and picnic were a great success. Over 30 cottages were represented. The meeting expressed gratitude to Gary for hosting the event

PPPA Treasury

Treasurer Suzanne McMahon reported on the Association's finances. For the Water Carnival, participants donated $470 and the Association spent an additional $248 from general funds. Dues-paying members may contact Suzanne for additional details of the report.



Meeting attendees suggested that when people do fall and spring clean-ups, they take brush and leaves to the dump. Charcoal and ashes should go to the dump also since they are a source of phosphorus that should not get into the pond water. The dump has great recycling facilities too.

The dump is on Avery Road, off Sargent Road. Required dump stickers are free from town hall or by mail (call 763-2212).

Dump Hours:
Mon, Thu, Fri, Sat: 8-4:30. Sun 8-12.

Boating Rules

The meeting discussed safety rules and norms for boating on Perkins Pond. PPPA members can help by publicizing the rules to renters and newcomers. It was generally agreed that the clockwise direction rule is intended for motor boats.

Jet skis operating in Perkins Pond were described as disruptive and unsafe. Comments included "I can't even talk with my family or hear my own television for the noise" and "you can't go out and enjoy the day with them buzzing around."

Opinions were mixed about whether to investigate procedures for banning jet skis from the pond. Gary agreed to convey the opinion of the meeting to jet skiers who operate excessively.

Memorabilia

Availability and management of Perkins Pond memorabilia is being reevaluated. Scott Sanders volunteered to investigate previous suppliers and items as well as possible new directions.

The Photos

The Perkins Pond scenes and water-skier in this issue were photographed in 1962-63. The squirrel, a current pond resident, is eating gourmet potato chips.

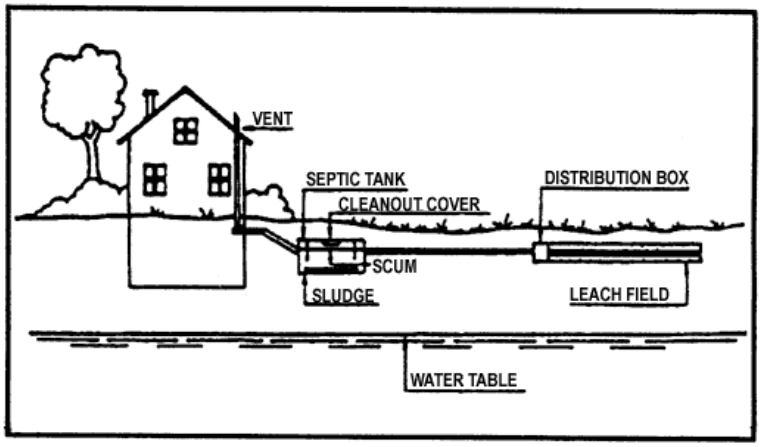
NH DES Environmental Fact Sheet

6 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 (603)271-3503 www.des.state.nh.us

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

WD-BB-11 1997

Septic Systems And Your Lake's Water Quality



How do septic systems work?

Septic systems act as the digestive tract for household organic waste and destroy disease-producing bacteria. The most commonly approved systems today consist of a septic tank connected to a leach field. The septic tank stores solid organic waste, and pipes waste water into the leach field where it is filtered and drained into the soil below.

How is water quality related to septic systems?

Certain nutrients build up in organic waste from your home and are dissolved in the water that ends up in the leach field. The nutrients that do not get filtered out eventually drain into the water table below the ground or drain into rivers and lakes that may be nearby. Nutrients - especially phosphorus - are vital to plant and algae growth. High levels of phosphorus, however, act as a fertilizer and create an environment where growth is unnaturally rapid. This deprives aquatic animals of vital dissolved oxygen and will speed up the life cycle of a lake through the build up of plant and algal matter.

What can you do to help water quality?

In order to alleviate the problem of phosphorus build up, each of us must act responsibly when addressing waste disposal. Be sure to contact your state and local agencies to determine whether your existing septic system, or the one you plan to build, meets all the regulations.

If your system is 20 years or older, chances are that it is outdated. If your present system is up to date, follow these simple guidelines to help maintain the natural flow of nutrients:

- Pump your septic tank when needed and at least every two to three years.
- Compost your kitchen garbage rather than using a garbage disposal. This keeps many nutrients from directly entering the water system.
- Report any sudden increase in aquatic algae or plant growth to the proper officials. This may be an indication of a phosphorus overload.
- Conserve water whenever possible. The more water in your septic system, the greater the possibility of nutrients leaching out through the system.
- Never flush toxic materials (such as paint, oil, or pesticides) down your drain. Not only do you risk the possibility of tainting your own drinking water, but you will also kill natural bacteria in your septic system that break down organic waste.
- Avoid flushing bulky materials down the drain. These will often clog your system and slow the decomposition process.
- Use phosphate-free or low phosphate dishwashing detergents.
- Run laundry or dishwashing cycles after a full load has been collected. This not only conserves water but will cut down on the amount of phosphates that drain into your septic system.

Lake Protection Tips from NH DES

WD-BB-9 1997

1. Pump out your septic tank every 3-5 years, or whenever the sludge level exceeds one-third of the tank capacity.
2. Be sure your system is designed to handle the load it receives. A leach field should be increased in size whenever the frequency (seasonal to year-round) or volume (more people, washing machines, etc.) of use increases.
3. Check your leach field for soft or wet areas or septic smells. Replace faulty systems.
4. Do not bathe, shampoo, or wash boats, pets, or other objects in the lake with soap or phosphorous-containing detergents. Do not wash automobiles near lakes where the detergent can run into the water.
5. Use low or non-phosphate detergent. Take clothes to a laundromat located outside the lake's drainage area..
6. Keep land clearing to a minimum. Re-vegetate bare areas to minimize erosion to the lake. Roads and paths leading to the lake should be curved to reduce erosion.
7. Maintain a buffer zone of natural vegetation along the shore to contain erosion and assimilate nutrients before they reach the lake.
8. Do not use fertilizer near the lake shore. Encourage lake-front residents to design shore fronts with natural vegetation, rather than green, manicured lawns.
9. Do not burn brush or leaves near the shore; the nutrients remain behind to be washed into the lake during the first rain. Do not dump leaves or grass clippings in or near the lake. They also add nutrients to the water.
10. Do not urinate or defecate in the lake, and don't allow pets to do the same. Animals should not be housed near the lake where the phosphorus in their manure can be washed into the lake by rain.
11. Do not feed ducks or other aquatic organisms; there is plenty of natural food available. Nutrients in the feed material will be added to the lake through the organism's feces.
12. Do not use powerful outboard motors in shallow areas. The nutrient-laden bottom sediments can be churned into the overlying water to support increased algae growth.

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