

Lake Currents

Lake of the Woods Improvement Association

Could a phosphorus ban become a reality?

Minnesota became the first state to enact statewide restrictions on phosphorus lawn fertilizers in 2004. Statewide restrictions in Florida went into effect in January 2008. Various counties in Illinois, Maryland, Washington and Wisconsin have put laws in to effect that ban the use of phosphorus lawn fertilizers.

With over 11,000 inland lakes to protect many counties in the State of Michigan are now following in the footsteps of others and reviewing the phosphorus ban.

Macomb County is the largest of Michigan's 83 counties to consider a ban, and the effort is getting support from U.S. Rep. Candice Miller. The former Michigan secretary of state, who lives in Macomb's Harrison Township, would like to see Michigan follow Minnesota's lead. She also plans to introduce federal legislation restricting phosphorus use in the Great Lakes Basin. (Mlive.com, 2008)

Ottawa County enacted the ban on phosphorus fertilizer in December 2006 but post-

poned enforcement to 2008 to educate the public and retailers. The penalty for first-time offenders is a \$50 fine. The Ottawa ban does have exemptions: It does not include farms and newly planted lawns.

Muskegon County enacted the ban in 2007. The penalty for first-time offenders is a \$25 fine. And Allegan County's ban takes effect in 2009. Fines will range from \$50 to \$300 for multiple time offenders.

The Van Buren County Board of Commissioners has given the go-ahead to begin the process of adopting an ordinance forbidding lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus. The proposed ordinance would ban phosphorus fertilizer for lawns but exempt farms, gardens, newly established turf in its first year, tree and shrub applications and any ground where soil testing by an authority shows phosphorus is needed.

Violations would result in fines of \$50-\$300. The ordinance would take effect Jan. 1, 2010, to allow stores to sell out their inventories.

Why are these bans necessary?

Phosphorus is found in such items as fertilizers and detergents. It works with nitrogen and potassium to provide the basic building blocks for plant growth. But phosphorus also has negative side effects. Runoff settles in shallow lake water and stimulates growth of weeds and algae. As water levels drop, the weed problem gets worse.

The next time you are looking to purchase lawn fertilizer look for those that are phosphorus free. The amount of phosphorus in a product can be determined by looking for the 3 numbers on the package. The numbers indicate the percent of nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. Look for packages where the middle number is zero (0) for phosphorus free products.

As property owners on Lake of the Woods, there are a few things that we can do to help keep phosphorus levels in the lake under control. (continued page 3)

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Did you know:

Neighborhood watch meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of every month for all Decatur and Hamilton Residents at the New Hamilton Township Hall on Territorial Road at 11:00am & 7:00pm.

Please call Sheila Dragomir (269)423-6417 with any questions.

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It's time to renew your Lake of the Woods Association Membership

It is time to renew your membership for 2009. We are trying to keep the membership renewals on a schedule so people can remember when to renew. Renewals will be at the first of each year.

The Lake of the Woods Association Board of Directors has announced that annual dues will remain at \$10.00 for the 2009 membership year.

Your \$10 for dues helps to promote the boater safety class, sponsor lake and community activities, such as the an-

nual picnic, the 4th of July boat parade and the local fireworks display.

Additional benefits include the Lake of the Woods website that includes news, photos, calendar of events and lots of great information.

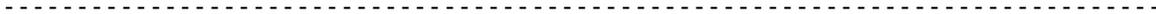
Please take a few minutes to review your renewal form and return it with any changes and your check or money order for \$10.00 in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

To those of you who have been faithful

members we thank you for your continued support, and we ask that you please encourage your neighbors to join the association.

As you can see the Lake of the Woods Improvement Association is involved in many activities to help maintain the quality of the lake now and for future generations.

Please do your part by joining us with your membership.



(Tear Here)

2009 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Lake of the Woods Improvement Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 188 Decatur, MI 49045-0188

Please return this entire form with your membership renewal.

Below is the information we currently have on file for you. If it is incorrect, please note any changes. Thank you for your continued support of YOUR lake association!

The suggested dues amount is again **\$10.00** for this year.





Upcoming Events

Happy New Year from the Lake of the Woods Association. We hope that everyone had a safe and enjoyable holiday season. It's time to start planning for the new year.

Mark your calendars to save the following dates:

February 14-15: Free fishing weekend. Residents and out of state visitors can fish Michigan inland lakes and Lake Michigan for free. All fishing license fees will be waived. (<http://michigan.gov/dnr>)

June 13: Boater Safety Class

June 13-14: Free fishing weekend. Residents and out of state visitors can fish Michigan inland lakes and Lake Michigan for free. All fishing license fees will be waived. (<http://michigan.gov/dnr>)

July 4: Decorated Boat Parade

July 18: Annual Meeting & Family Picnic.

Please check the website and upcoming newsletters for more information.

Shop Local

Please remember to patronize the local businesses that have helped and supported our lake association.

- High's Marine
- Warner Supply
- Rajzer's Farm Market
- Super Wash
- Decatur Lumber

www.lakeofthewoodsmi.org turns 5 years old

It's hard to believe that the Lake of the Woods Association website has been in place for 5 years. The website is used as a communication tool to keep members up to date on lake happenings, important updates and also to share the beauty and joy of our lake.

Are you planning on buying a new set of water skis or upgrading your boat this year? Why not try selling your old one on the classified section of the website.

Has a paddle boat drift to your pier and you do not know it's owner? Contact the webmasters to add the item to the lost and found section of the classified.

Do you have beautiful picture of the sunrise? Did your 3 year old granddaughter catch her first fish? Share



Happy 5th Anniversary to the website

your photos with other lake members. Send your photos in .jpg format to the webmasters to add to the website.

All these services are available for free with your Lake of the Woods Membership.

To take advantage of these services or to submit any comments or suggestions contact the webmasters via email at: webmaster@LakeOfTheWoodsMI.org

Phosphorus Ban

(continued from page 1)

- Do not use fertilizer. If you need to use fertilizer, make sure it is phosphorus-free.
- Try to use phosphorus-free detergents and soaps. Since almost every home on the lake is on a septic system, and these ultimately drain waste water into the lake's watershed, common household detergents and soaps can contribute a large amount of phosphorus to the lake.

- Keep your property clear of animal and yard waste. Not only will it make your property more enjoyable, but it will also keep organic matter, which contains significant amounts of phosphorus, from entering the lake

Following these few simple guidelines will help keep Lake of the Woods healthy and beautiful for ourselves and for future generations.

Comments

The Lake of the Woods Board of Directors would like to hear from you. Do you have any suggestions on events or projects that you would like the Board to pursue in 2009? Please contact any Board Member either by e-mail or mail with your thoughts and suggestions..

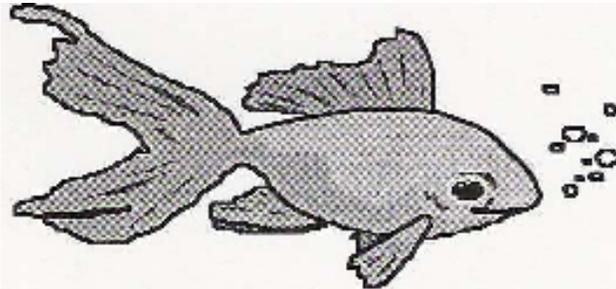
Would you like to see something included in the newsletter? Please send your comments or articles for inclusion to: webmaster@LakeOfTheWoodsMI.org



*Lake of the Woods
Improvement Association*

www.lakeofthewoodsmi.org

Roger Mattens
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*Servicing Lake of the Woods residents
since 1980!*



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