



Being a Good Lake Neighbor

There are many ways to be a good neighbor on the lake. Here are some of them. We ask that each of us consider the following recommendations. Most of these behaviors are simply common courtesy. A few are also the law. Some of the issues may surprise you. We believe that all are worthwhile suggestions that can help us live together as lake neighbors.

Lake Health

- Keep pollutants out of the lake
 - Don't use herbicides where they can run into the lake
 - Do not dispose of paints, pharmaceuticals, or petroleum products in your septic
- Keep excess nutrients out of the lake
 - Consider runoff when making landscaping decisions
 - Stop mowing/cultivating at the shore; allow a natural buffer to develop
 - Avoid using fertilizer where it can run into the lake
- Be aware that boat wakes contribute to the breakdown of the shoreline. Also note that the continual wave action may deter our resident loons from making a successful nest and having young.

Safety

- Observe 5 mph "no-wake speed" within 200 feet of shorelines, docks, kayaks, etc.
- Stay alert for swimmers and give them a wide (200') berth
- Avoid excessive speed on roads around the lake, especially the straight sections of Rte 244

Noise

- Be mindful that sound carries exceptionally well across the lake. Be courteous to other residents and users of the lake. Plan to end parties, and particularly loud music or fireworks, at a reasonable hour.
- Some people find the sound of dogs barking particularly annoying. This frequently happens when the owners leave and are not there to hear it.

Light

- Aim outdoor "path lighting" down, not out.
- Put "security lights" on a timer or motion detector, so that they do not stay on all night.
- Use lower wattage, warm bulbs that are a softer white.

Being a Good Lake Neighbor – Why You Should Do It

Lake Fairlee provides a rich variety of opportunities for recreation. Many of us find our lives enriched by its natural beauty. Those of us who live or regularly spend time on Lake Fairlee share this valuable natural resource.

Sometimes our activities come into conflict. For example, the noise or the wake from a powerboat can be an annoyance to those who would prefer the lake's quiet serenity. Or the desire to have a perfect lawn can result in unnecessary fertilizer runoff into the lake. As the lake becomes more crowded it becomes increasingly important that we acknowledge the community in which we participate, and give a little thought to how we want to behave in this community.

Lake Health

The lake is a delicately balanced ecosystem. Its health is reflected in the clarity of the water, the abundance of fish, and the absence of "blooms" of algae and cyanobacteria. It can be damaged by the introduction of non-natural substances such as paints, weed killers, or petroleum products. It also can suffer from an excess of nutrients. One way in which nutrients are introduced are from runoff of fertilizer (even organic fertilizer) from farms in the watershed or from lawns. Another is from earthmoving, as for road grading or home construction, because the soil that finds its way into the lake carries nitrogen and phosphorous from of the decayed vegetation of which it is made.

Safety

As the lake becomes more crowded with motorboats, opportunities for accidents increase. The narrow "waist" that separates the north end of Lake Fairlee from the west end creates an additional hazard. State law requires that boats over 5 mph "no wake" speed stay more than 200 feet from the shoreline (and from any docks, canoes, swimmers, etc.) and the "narrows" is only about 900 feet wide. In fact, it is the danger posed by the narrows that prompted the State to prohibit the use of personal watercraft on our lake, which are normally allowed on any lake greater than 250 acres.

Smooth pavement and straight sections of Route 244 along the lake sometimes invite car and truck speeds well in excess of the posted 40 mph limit – this in spite of the three summer camps and frequent walkers and bicyclists that share the route.

Noise

Noises carry exceptionally well across the open water of the lake. Lakeshore residents frequently can hear even quiet conversations from quite a distance. It follows that barking dogs, noisy conversation, and amplified music can also disturb others across the lake. Loud fireworks pose a singular problem. How late should a noisy party continue? There is no agreed guideline, but we urge all to be concerned for our neighbors' peace.

Light

Bright lights shining from another property into your window can be an annoyance. The proliferation of this lighting is being called "light pollution." Many come to the lake hoping to escape the "city lights", and some enjoy the myriad stars visible only in the countryside. Security lighting does not need to be so bright to be effective. Lights on a motion sensor can be an effective deterrent to intruders. Pathway lighting should point down.

There is more information about some of these issues on our website at <http://lakefairlee.org>

If you are a landlord, please share this sheet with your renters!