What is harming your lake?

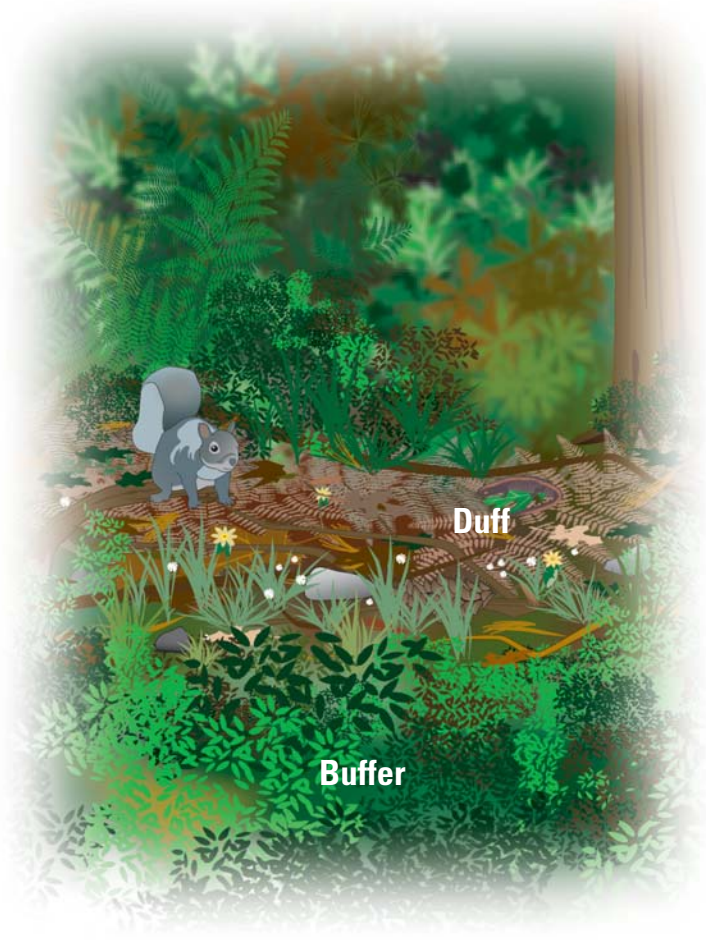
PHOSPHORUS! It is not just in fertilizer. All the pollutants pictured here contain phosphorus. Eroded soil from yards and particularly from roads is the number one water pollutant.

Phosphorus in soil and fertilizer promotes plant growth in your garden and in our lake! In lakes, however, the crop is algae, rather than garden vegetables. Algal blooms smell terrible, turn water green and use up oxygen. Lower oxygen levels in the water "choke" fish. Swimming, fishing and lakeside living lose their appeal and the value of your property goes down.

You may think that just a little pet waste or extra fertilizer won't make a difference; but a little pollution from you, from your neighbor, from others around the lake, year after year, does add up to a polluted lake.

You can make a difference.

During a rainstorm, observe where the stormwater flows. Next, direct the stormwater flow to a vegetated area called a "buffer". A buffer is a landscape with an abundance of trees, shrubs, ground cover and "duff". Duff is all the twigs, leaves, and pine needles that our culture believes is messy and needs to be raked up. Leave it alone. Duff is nature's mulch; it nourishes the vegetation and holds moisture during a dry spell. When stormwater enters a buffer, it slows and seeps into the ground where soil particles bind phosphorus and hold it for use by plants.



Determine what parts of the lawn you actually use for recreation and stop mowing the rarely used areas. You can supplement the no-mow areas with beautiful native shrubs and flowering plants that enhance visual appeal and property value.

Frame your view of the lake with native plants that attract wildlife and provide privacy for your family. A lush, wide ribbon of trees and shrubs is the number one lake protection tool.

DEPLW0739

Information about LakeSmart: Contact Maine Lakes Society at 207-495-2301 or www.mainelakessociety.org

Most people want to enjoy the lake, relax and see nature—NOT mow the lawn and rake the yard.

Now You're *LakeSmart*

Have you ever seen a muddy stream during a rainstorm? When we develop the landscape, we expose bare soil that gets washed down hill during a rainstorm. This means that any activity in the lake's watershed, all land uphill of a lake, has potential to affect the lake. In undeveloped watersheds, natural vegetation slows the flow of rainwater and filters out nutrients that can pollute lakes.

What you do in the watershed affects the lake!

Substituting lawns for native trees and shrubs removes nature's natural filtration system. If too much of this occurs, the rain becomes runoff that carries pollution downhill to lakes. LakeSmart shows you how to capture rain and convert it into groundwater so it is filtered before it flows into the lake. Good idea!

Be *LakeSmart*

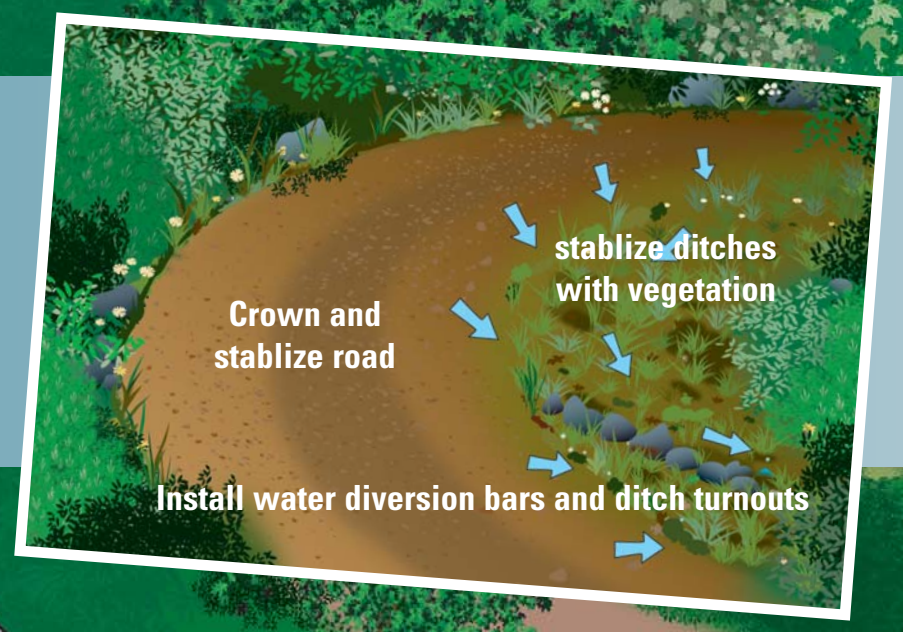
for the Sake of Your Lake

Being *LakeSmart* preserves water quality and property values while protecting wildlife and the outstanding recreation Maine lakes provide

Do you appreciate Maine's clear, clean lakes? What does the beautiful panorama of your lake, the song of the loon, or a boundless summer day boating mean to you? Will you help protect your lake so your children and grandchildren will be able to experience the lake benefits you enjoy?

21 Ways This Property Is *LakeSmart*.

This typical older camp, sited closer to the lake than current regulations allow, protects the lake when doing all the practices listed below.



Pump septic system every 3-5 years

Keep septic system free of woody growth

Cover exterior heating tank

Buy fewer chemicals, store safely, dispose at hazardous waste collection site

Minimize and define parking area

Plant vegetation downhill of parking area

Directed roof runoff to a rain garden

Apply pesticides ONLY as a last resort, avoid use for aesthetic purposes.

Minimize lawn area

Plant or mulch all bare soil

Pick up pet waste and put in trash

Cut grass at 3 inches, leave clippings to minimize use of fertilizers

Keep shoreline stable by not disturbing vegetation and rocks

Maintain or enhance native vegetation (buffer) including tall trees, short trees, shrubs and ground cover

Make paths stable and winding

Leave duff layer as natural mulch

Remove dock each fall

Leave native water plants to stabilize shoreline

For more information, call the Maine Lakes Society at 207-495-2301 or your local lake association