

Dear Property Owner:

Grand Lake is a beautiful place to live and play. It also has a complex ecosystem that supports a vast range of aquatic plants, wildlife, and is the source of potable water for humans. Grand Lake draws residents to fishing, boating, and swimming. The health of Grand Lake relies heavily on the decisions made by lakeshore homeowners.

The choices lakeshore homeowners make in maintaining their shorelines – whether through landscaping, the use of fertilizers, or the care of native plants – can significantly impact the health of the lake and the community the water supports. Poor choices can lead to devastating effects on both the water quality and the fragile ecosystems that depend on maintaining a healthy lake.

MUNICIPAL LAND USE REGULATIONS FOR LAKESHORE PROPERTY OWNERS

The Municipality of East Hants has established regulations that govern land use around all lakes in East Hants.

For lakeshore properties that border Grand Lake, the following rules apply:

Boathouses and Docks

- Each property may have one boathouse and one dock.
- A boathouse may be no larger than 65 square metres in ground area.
- Boathouses may be used only for storing boats, watercraft (such as canoes and

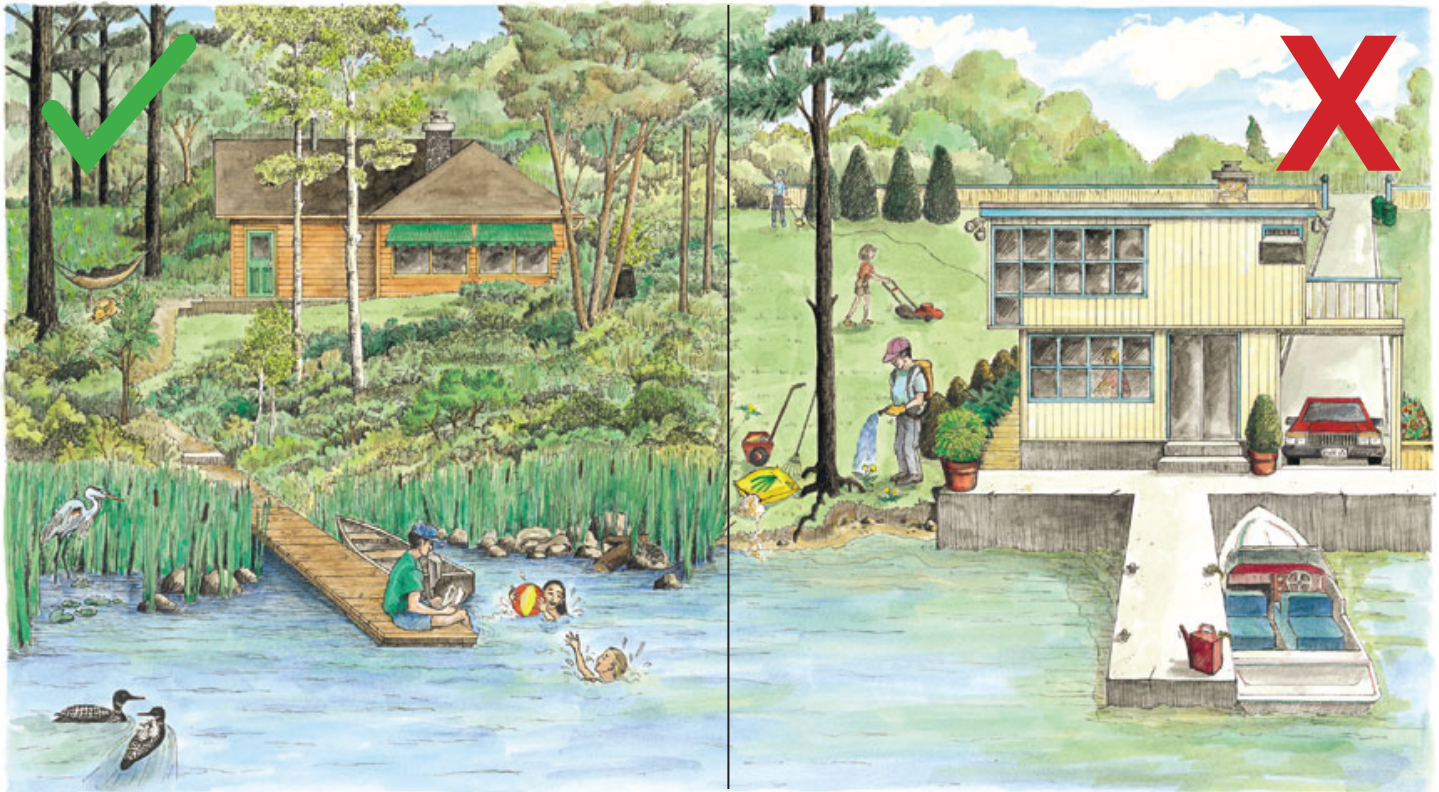
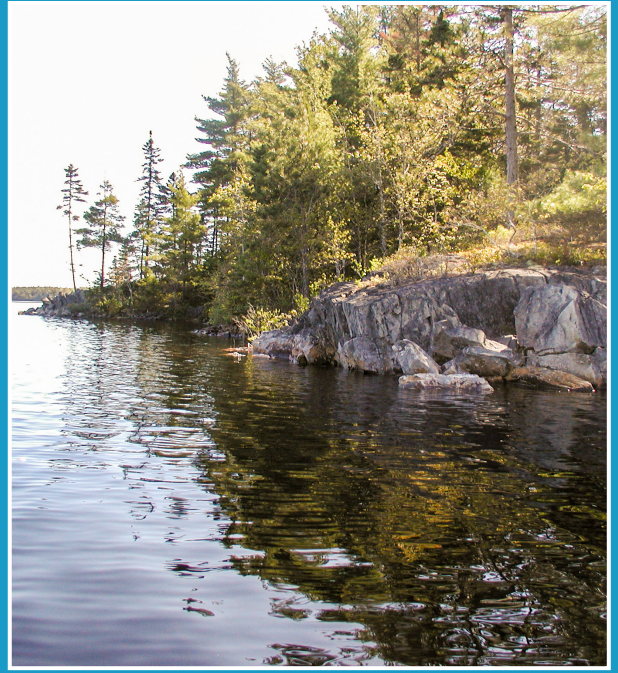


Photo: Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

HEALTHY SHORELINES

A healthy vegetative buffer will provide the following advantages in the protection of Grand Lake:

1. Vegetative buffers improve water quality and help to prevent algae blooms by filtering excess nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen from entering the water column.
2. Vegetative buffers help to maintain shoreline stability and prevent erosion and sedimentation.
3. Vegetative buffers create good habitat for birds, microorganisms, and other wildlife.
4. Vegetative buffers protect property values by ensuring the previous items are controlled and by helping to protect buildings and trees on your property from flooding, wind and ice damage.



kayaks), and related marine equipment. They cannot be used for living space, a garage, or other purposes.

- The side of the boathouse that runs along the shoreline may be no wider than 7 metres.
- A dock may be no wider than 3 metres at the shoreline.
- Together, the boathouse and dock may take up no more than 25% of your shoreline frontage, or a maximum of 10 metres, whichever is less.

Vegetation Near the Shoreline

- Natural vegetation within 10 metres of the normal high water mark must remain undisturbed.
- Limited clearing is allowed to build docks, boathouses, and walkways up to 1.8 metres wide.
- You may remove up to 35% of trees and underbrush within this area to create a filtered view of the lake.
- Trees that are dangerous or diseased may be removed at any time.

If you have questions about these requirements or are planning shoreline work, please contact

Planning and Development before starting construction at planning@easthants.ca.

REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM AND SEPTIC MAINTENANCE

Grand Lake is the source water for the Regional Water Treatment Facility and Distribution System, which supplies safe drinking water to utility customers in Enfield, Elmsdale, and Lantz. In addition, many private property owners rely on Grand Lake as their household water source. The health and water quality of Grand Lake directly affect the level of treatment required at the Enfield Water Treatment Plant. For example, effluent from a failing septic system that discharges into the lake can introduce contaminants such as pathogens, nutrients, and household chemicals. These contaminants impact the water quality and may require more advanced treatment processes.

Regular septic system maintenance—including routine pumping—is essential to prevent costly repairs, avoid system backups, extend the lifespan of the system, and protect the environment. For Grand Lake lakeshore property owners,

proper maintenance benefits not only individual homeowners but all water utility customers.

The Government of Nova Scotia offers “A Homeowner’s Guide to Septic Systems”, a helpful resource that explains how septic systems work and provides practical guidance on proper care and maintenance. The guide can be found at novascotia.ca/nse/wastewater/docs/homeowners.guide.to.septic.systems.pdf

Replacing a failing septic system is a costly but essential undertaking. To support East Hants property owners, the Municipality has established a low-interest loan program to help with necessary septic system upgrades—protecting water quality while keeping household systems operating effectively.

Application and eligibility details here: easthants.ca/well-and-septic-loan-program

INVASIVE SPECIES

Although Grand Lake does not currently have the invasive species discussed below, it is always at risk. With Grand Lake being such an important recreational lake the possibility of an invasive species being brought to the lake from watercraft used on other water bodies is significant.

Red Swamp Crayfish

Red Swamp Crayfish is an invasive species that has been found in the Halifax Regional Municipality, not far from Grand Lake. They are not native to Nova Scotia and the first reported sighting was in September 2022.

Important facts to know about the Red Swamp Crayfish are:

- They are most active during warmer months in and around freshwater lakes.
- They can walk and swim.
- They are responsible for significant burrowing and disturbing the habitat of local species.
- This type of crayfish can reduce biodiversity,

cause erosion, and interfere with infrastructure, making it a threat to the Grand Lake Watershed.

- Red Swamp Crayfish are available through the live organism trade and are used for food, in aquariums, and as bait.

If you see a Red Swamp Crayfish, leave it alone and report it to: Toll-free: 1-888-435-4040



Zebra Mussels

Zebra Mussels are another invasive species that is a huge threat to Nova Scotia lakes. The freshwater mussels:

- Disrupt ecosystems and native species.
- Damage infrastructure and increase maintenance costs; including damaging pipes that support water utilities.
- Reduce recreational enjoyment and tourism revenue.
- Spread quickly and are difficult to control.



Once Zebra Mussels establish a population in a lake, removing them is nearly impossible. This makes prevention the most effective strategy to keep our lakes and rivers free from them.

Since microscopic Zebra Mussel larvae are too small to be seen, they can easily be unknowingly transported in:

- Water left inside boats, motors, and livewells.
- Ballast tanks and bilges.
- Fishing gear and bait buckets.
- Any water-holding compartment on a vessel or equipment.

If this contaminated water is released into an

uninfected lake or river, a new outbreak can quickly take hold. Closest known outbreak of Zebra Mussels to Nova Scotia is in the Saint John (Wolastoq) River watershed.

Since Zebra Mussels can also survive out of water for up to 18 days in high humidity, it is critical for water users to:

1. **Clean** - Remove any visible mussels, plants, or debris from boats, trailers, and equipment.
2. **Drain** - Empty all water from live wells, bilges, and bait buckets before leaving a water body.
3. **Dry** - Allow boats and gear to dry before entering another water body.



For more information on invasive species visit: nsinvasives.ca

Contact the East Hants Planning and Development Department if you have questions regarding lakeshore development or to report illegal activities.

email: planning@easthants.ca

phone: 902.883.3387