



# Respect Our Lakes

Responsible  
Lake Living

Report it! For environmental complaints  
or emergencies, call the environmental  
hotline at 1-800-222-6514

## For more information:

Search 'Respect our Lakes' on [Alberta.ca](http://Alberta.ca)  
Contact us at [rol@gov.ab.ca](mailto:rol@gov.ab.ca)  
Call 310-3773

Alberta

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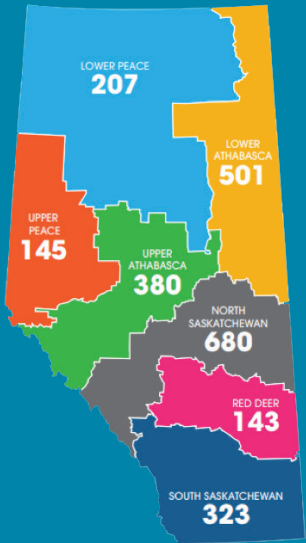


## Keeping Alberta's Lakes Healthy

Lakeside land owners understand the value of healthy lakes for lake residents and visitors, and are environmental stewards committed to passing the legacy on to future generations.

The lakes of Alberta range from deep, cold, and clear in the mountains to more shallow, warm, and often greener on the prairies. All play an essential role in maintaining local biodiversity, and for safeguarding the water quality and quantity for those living, working and playing nearby.

As Alberta's population continues to grow, there is increasing human use of the lake watershed, the land that drains into the lake. This, together with climatic variability, means that Albertans must consider new ways to protect our lakes to ensure they stay healthy for years to come.



Approximate number of lakes and reservoirs in each land use region.

### Stewardship in the watershed

Anyone who lives within a lake watershed can take these steps to improve the health of the lake and watershed!

- Maintain natural vegetation such as native trees and shrubs—they are much easier to care for than a lawn and will filter out pollutants and nutrients.
- Don't use lawn fertilizers because they add excess nutrients that feed algae and contribute to algal blooms. If needed, use organic, slow-release fertilizers for other gardening uses.
- Plant native plants and shrubs on your property in places where soil is exposed. Watch for invasive species and report invaders to [www.eddmaps.org/](http://www.eddmaps.org/)
- Prevent rainwater and snow melt from washing pollutants into the lake. Reduce non-permeable surfaces like pavement and redirect runoff towards vegetation or a rain barrel.
- Have your septic system inspected regularly and empty septic tanks as recommended, or connect to municipal sewer system.
- Keep "wheels out of water" – driving off-highway vehicles along the bed and shore of any waterbody is illegal, damages important fish and wildlife habitat and impacts water quality.

### Stewardship on the shore

Actions of individual shoreline residents add up to make a huge difference!

- Leave the shoreline in its natural condition — shoreline vegetation provides habitat for fish and

wildlife, maintains water quality by filtering runoff and protects the shoreline against erosion. It is illegal to do any shoreline modification below the bank (on the bed and shore) without written authorization from the Government of Alberta.

- Aquatic plants are not "weeds" — let them grow! Submerged aquatic vegetation compete with algae for nutrients and light, trap sediment and provide important fish and wildlife habitat. Removal requires written authorization.
- Consider sharing docks, piers and boat lanes within your community to minimize shoreline disturbance.
- Keep your beach natural, don't plow it or add sand.
- Pick up dog poop and flush it or throw it in the garbage. This will help prevent harmful bacteria and phosphorus from entering the lake.

### Stewardship on the water

It's time to get out on the water! Responsible recreation will help keep our lakes healthy for everyone to enjoy.

- Watch your wake! Keep motorized sports far from shore to prevent erosion and protect bird nests.
- Obey the law—keep boat speeds under 10km/hr within 30m of the shoreline and follow posted speed limits.
- Keep music and boat noise to a minimum.
- Clean Drain Dry Your Gear to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and diseases.
- Dispose of waste properly and remove ice fishing huts prior to the assigned date.
- Wash your pets, vehicles and off-highway vehicles at designated wash stations away from the lake.

Learn more about your lake and beneficial management practices! Get involved with your local lake stewardship group to help promote responsible lake living.

Everything that happens within the lake watershed can influence water quality and quantity.

