

Ten Steps to a Healthy Lake



Fertilize wisely

Use fertilizers sparingly and well away from the lake. Any soluble nutrients present in the soil will be carried to the lake by runoff. Nutrients from fertilizers are a major contributor to excessive plant growth of nuisance plants. See the Fertilizer Use and Landscape Management Rule on EPC's website at www.epchc.org.

Keep the lake free of yard trash

When mowing, rake the lawn clippings to prevent them from washing into the lake and adding to the nutrient load. Compost clippings or dry them and use them as mulch in areas away from the lake.

Pick up after your pet

Fecal matter contains bacteria that can pose a health hazard to those using the lake, including wildlife, and contributes nutrients to the lake that can result in blooms of nuisance vegetation.

Dispose of all waste responsibly

Never dump motor oil, paint, or other chemicals on the ground. In addition to contaminating the groundwater, these chemicals can run off and pollute wetlands, lakes, and waterways.

**Storm drains are ONLY
for rainwater.
Never discard ANY waste into
storm drains.**

Avoid insecticides and herbicides

Pesticides are toxic to fish and wildlife and damaging to lakes. Use them only as a last resort and as far away from the lake as possible. **NEVER** spray herbicides on vegetation in or near the lake; this is illegal without a permit. The dead vegetation will decay and add nutrients to the lake, resulting in a cycle of excessive plant growth.

Check runoff from roofs, patios, and driveways

Where does the stormwater go? Redirect any stormwater drainage routes that lead directly into the lake; roofs, patios, and driveways can contaminate the lake with oil, tar, paint, and other toxins.

Maintain a buffer of natural vegetation

A zone of vegetation (even as little as 5 feet wide) along seawalls and shorelines helps absorb nutrients and pollutants that might drain into the lake. The buffer also provides wildlife habitat (fish, crayfish, turtles, etc.) and erosion control, as well as helping reduce recruitment of invasive and nuisance vegetation.



Organize your efforts

Form a civic association of the residents around the lake. One person can make a difference, and many people make a difference faster.

Contact EPC prior to any activity

Activities such as dock or boat ramp construction, removal of nuisance vegetation, dredging, filling, and most other activities associated with the lake (or other wetlands) require permits.



For information on permits required and what agencies to contact, call the Environmental Protection Commission, the

Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, or the Tampa Port Authority.

Be informed

The EPC wants the citizens of Hillsborough County to know what their natural resources are and how to conserve them. Call the EPC at (813) 627-2600 any time you have questions or concerns regarding your environment.

Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County



Roger P. Stewart Center
3629 Queen Palm Drive
Tampa, FL 33619

(813) 627-2600

www.epchc.org