



LAKE MINNETONKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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DATE: September 25, 2019

TO: Member Cities

FROM: LMCD Board of Directors
Dan Baasen (Wayzata), Ben Brandt (Mound), Bill Cook (Greenwood), Ann Hoelscher (Victoria), Gary Hughes (Spring Park), Jake Walesch (Woodland), Dennis Klohs (Minnetonka Beach), Mark Kroll (Orono), Chris Rich (Greenwood), Mike Molitor (Minnetrista), Nicole Stone (Minnetonka), Gregg Thomas (Tonka Bay), Deborah Zorn (Shorewood)


Vickie Schleuning, LMCD Executive Director

SUBJECT: LMCD September 2019 Updates

The following includes highlights of current topics and inquiries regarding Lake Minnetonka as the Summer season comes to an end.

1. End of Boating Season Reminders

- **Solar Lights.** **Solar Lights** will be removed by *October 14th*, 2019 for annual winter storage and maintenance. **Navigational Buoys** will be removed starting October 15th with completion by November 15th, 2019. Time frames may vary depending on weather.
- **Preparing for Winter.** Be sure to have a plan for **removing all watercraft and applicable structures** before the bays start to freeze over. Besides causing damage to property, not removing watercraft may pose safety risks to other lake users. Temporary deicing operations may not be used.
- **Ice Tweener Time.** Remember that **ice is unpredictable, especially during the in-between times** when the bays are starting to freeze over. Lake users are encouraged to wait until the lake completely freezes over and adequate ice depths exist.

2. Lake-Wide Vegetation & AIS Master Plan

General Vegetation Trends

Due to cooler temperatures and higher than usual water levels, Lake Minnetonka experienced less vegetation growth than typical overall, especially in the early summer months. However, more reports of filamentous algae (pond scum) were reported this summer. This is typical of what other lakes in Minnesota experienced this summer. Vegetation growth became more evident as temperatures increased and water levels returned to normal levels in July and August. Suspected AIS sightings or excessive vegetation can be reported using a web-mapping tool [here](#).

AIS Master Plan

The LMCD is continuing to take steps in identifying, preventing and managing Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) threats on Lake Minnetonka with the help of Emmons & Olivier, Inc. (EOR) and Blue

Water Science (BWS). The planning process for the Lake-Wide Vegetation & AIS Master Plan began with a public launch on June 18, 2019. The first part of the process, which includes data gathering, is nearly complete. Knowing the state of vegetation in all the bays throughout the lake is an important part of the decision-making process for developing a plan. We thank the MCWD, MN DNR, U of M, and all those who provided recent vegetation delineations and data and Hennepin County for assisting with the vegetation delineations.

The majority of bays did not have vegetation delineations so surveys were completed for those bays in September. Starry stonewort identification was also incorporated into the vegetation delineation surveys. Other organizations have contributed to identification efforts, including the Lake Minnetonka Association (LMA), which contracted a company to check for starry stonewort at public launches. At this point, starry stonewort has not been found in Lake Minnetonka.

The collected data will be added to the online vegetation map. You may view the progress at the [AIS Master Plan Webpage](#) under "Get Involved."

A report regarding the harvesting program review and starry stonewort plan is also being drafted.

More information is available on the [AIS Master Plan webpage](#) and public input via the [vegetation survey](#) is encouraged.

2019 AIS Research and Management Showcase

On September 18, 2019, MAISRC held a conference regarding current research findings and upcoming research projects for aquatic invasive species (AIS). Topics includes starry stonewort, zebra mussels, hybrid watermilfoil, spiny waterfleas, etc. A lot of collaborative efforts are underway to address AIS and protect waterbodies in Minnesota. Some of the presentations and posters are now available on their website at this [link](#).

3. Mass Gatherings and Illnesses

In continuing follow up to the illnesses reported following the 4th of July on Lake Minnetonka, the LMCD has been working with Hennepin County and stakeholders to identify and introduce possible measures to reduce the risks of illness. More concerted efforts are intended over the winter.

Watercraft Wastewater Discharge Code Suggested Amendment

One item being reviewed as part of efforts to help reduce waterborne illnesses is regarding the intentional or accidental discharge of wastewater from watercraft. This item was suggested by a marina owner, Gabriel Jabbour.

The LMCD Board will discuss draft language for a code amendment regarding wastewater discharge on Lake Minnetonka at the September 25th board meeting. The proposed amendment would reinforce state and federal laws as well as add language that requires the removal of certain wastewater devices, such as grinder pumps or macerators, from watercraft operating on Lake Minnetonka. If you have comments, you may attend the board meeting or submit comments to the LMCD office. The plan is for this item to have additional consideration at an October board meeting.

4. Seawall Repairs at Hendrickson Channel

Beginning the week of September 30, 2019, Hennepin County Public Works will begin repairing the seawalls at Hendrickson Channel in Orono. If weather permits, the project is expected to be completed this fall. Hennepin County offered the following details to be aware of while the project is active:

- Work may occur from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- When crews are working on-site, there will be no access through the channel.
- The channel will be open when crews are not working and all weekends.
- North Arm public access will remain open throughout the project.

Updates and more project information can be found at www.hennepin.us/hendricksonchannel.

5. Recodification Update

The final draft of the Recodification of LMCD Code was approved by the Board on August 28, 2019 and goes into effect after 60 days. The full Code of Ordinances is available on the LMCD website or via this [link](#). The next step in the process is to continue to review performance standards.

6. Lake Minnetonka Strategic Plan

An updated 2019-2021 Strategic Plan was reviewed by the Board on July 24, 2019 and approved on August 14, 2019. It is an aggressive work plan rooted in the organization's mission to protect and enhance the "Lake Minnetonka experience." The updated plan builds on the previous initiatives and includes new initiatives. The 2019-2021 Strategic Plan is available on the LMCD website or via this [link](#).

7. Preventing Pollution

Microplastics

On September 12th, 2019, Lakeshore Weekly News published an article regarding a science project conducted by local students that reported high levels of microplastics in Lake Minnetonka. A link to the article is [Here](#). According to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA), microplastics are plastic debris less than 5 millimeters in length; the debris comes from larger plastic that has broken down or from microbeads common in many beauty and health products. It is important for the short and long-term health of the Lake Minnetonka and other waterbodies to help reduce the amount of waste, properly dispose of trash, and help pick up trash whenever possible.

Adopt-A-Drain

Plastics and trash are not the only items that are bad for our lakes and rivers. Other materials such as grass, leaves, fertilizers, road salt, pet waste, etc. are pollutants that can become food for algae. Out of control algae can choke out native plants and animals. Volunteers who adopt a storm drain, help provide cleaner waterways and healthier communities-- for a little as fifteen minutes twice a month. Visit Adopt-a-Drain.org to find a storm drain near you to adopt.

For more information, please visit the www.lmcd.org website, contact the LMCD office at lmcd@lmcd.org or 952-745-0789, or contact your city's LMCD representative.