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## LMCD Update December 11, 2019

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Hello,

As the year ends, we would like to update you about some highlights of current topics and inquiries regarding Lake Minnetonka. A PDF version of this email is also available on the LMCD Website at this [LINK](#). Thank you for your cooperation and support in preserving and enhancing the Lake Minnetonka experience. If you have questions, please contact LMCD Executive Director Vickie Schleuning or your city's appointed Board Director. Have a wonderful holiday season.

### GENERAL INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS

- **Holiday Hours.** The LMCD office will be closed December 24 and 25, 2019 in observance of Christmas and January 1, 2020 for New Years.
- **SAVE the LAKE Fall 2019.** The Save the Lake Fall 2019 contribution drive has begun. For more than 50 years, the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD) has been taking actions to preserve Lake Minnetonka and enhance the experience of those that enjoy the lake. Your tax-deductible contribution to LMCD SAVE the LAKE will help ensure Lake Minnetonka continues to be a treasure for all in the future. Visit the "Save the Lake" [Webpage](#) or view the [Flyer](#) to learn more or to pay through PayPal link. On behalf of the LMCD, we thank you for your support.

### VEGETATION & AIS STRATEGY

- **AIS & Vegetation Master Plan.**  
The board will consider the status of the harvesting program and general AIS strategy direction at the December 11, 2019 Board Meeting.
- A second meeting of the AIS and Vegetation Master Plan Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was held on November 21, 2019 to review feedback on the draft Starry Stonewort Plan and draft Harvesting Program Evaluation. The majority of time was spent discussing agency strategies and roles. Individual meetings with each of the involved agencies will help guide a third meeting of the TAG in January.

In addition to the TAG and city comments, more than 100 public comments were received from the general public. All comments received regarding the AIS &

Vegetation Master Plan through 11/20/2019 are now available on the LCMD website or via this [LINK](#).

## LAKE SAFETY

- **Ice Safety.** It's Ice Tweener Time—the days-to-weeks transition period between open water and solid freeze. Be extra cautious of unsafe conditions around Lake Minnetonka. While cold temperatures are predicted for the coming days, be aware there are still many areas of open water and thin ice. On Friday, December 6, Hennepin County Water Patrol Officers reported ice cracking under their feet during ice rescue training. The MN DNR's recommendations for ice depths for various ice activities and how to check ice conditions can be found via this [LINK](#).
- **New Marine Toilets Ordinance.** In October, the LMCD passed a new ordinance regarding marine toilets. The new ordinance clarifies and reinforces existing regulations that prohibit the discharge of sewage into the lake and require the discharge valves (“Y valves”) to be locked. In addition, the marine toilet macerator/grinder pumps must be removed from watercraft to prevent the accidental or intentional discharge of sewage into Lake Minnetonka. Marina owners and lake service providers were instrumental in developing the ordinance and will be monitoring and reporting any violations.

A media release distributed on November 25, 2019 includes a summary of the new regulation and is linked below. News articles regarding the change are also linked below. Please contact the LMCD office if you have any questions.

- [LMCD Media Release - November 25, 2019](#)
  - <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/11/26/after-outbreak-minnetonka-boaters-face-tighter-sewage-rules>
  - <https://bringmethenews.com/minnesota-news/after-july-4th-sickness-outbreak-tighter-rules-for-boat-toilets-on-lake-minnetonka>
  - [https://www.swnewsmedia.com/lakeshore\\_weekly/news/local/lmcd-adopts-new-ordinance-in-hopes-of-preventing-future-illness/article\\_8e9a672a-2a97-5250-8f34-f3886e46e959.html](https://www.swnewsmedia.com/lakeshore_weekly/news/local/lmcd-adopts-new-ordinance-in-hopes-of-preventing-future-illness/article_8e9a672a-2a97-5250-8f34-f3886e46e959.html)
  - <https://kstp.com/news/lake-minnetonka-conservation-district-announces-new-regulations-for-toilets-on-boats/5563169/>
  - <http://www.startribune.com/lake-minnetonka-gets-stricter-rules-against-sewage-discharge-from-boat-toilets/565624072/>
- **Mass Gatherings Update.** Several agencies, including Hennepin County Environmental Health, will be collaborating to review options to reduce the risk of illnesses and nuisances at mass gatherings, such as those that occur over July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. While the LMCD has compiled public comments received as a result of this summer's July 4<sup>th</sup> outbreak, additional public input will be sought during the process. More information will be available in the future.

- **Learn About Events and Amenities on the Lake.** If you are a first-time visitor, planning a social event, or want to learn more about Lake Minnetonka, information is available on the LMCD website. Maps, a calendar of events, and information about lake amenities such as public accesses, toilet facilities, fuel, marinas, and more can be found under Around the Lake Tab on the homepage or at this [LINK](#). We will continue to update the website to provide convenient access to helpful information. Please let us know any suggestions.
- **Winter Sign Installation.** Winter rules signs are now posted at public winter launches. A volunteer and staff also picked up trash and litter at several of the launches. We strongly encourage people to help keep our lake clean and safe by picking up any observed litter, even on land. It can eventually end up polluting our lakes and streams.
- **Deicing Activity.** Deicing operations (bubblers) will occur for certain marinas and properties on Lake Minnetonka for Winter 2019-2020 to help prevent ice damage to properties. Deicing operations may exist on the following bays at this time: Browns, Cooks, Crystal, Excelsior, Forest Lake, Gideons, Grays, Lafayette, Lower Lake South, Maxwell, Smiths, South Upper Lake, St. Albans, Wayzata, and West Arm. Remember that ice is never completely safe and use caution near deicing operations or where you see danger or thin ice signs.
- **Sheriff's Water Patrol Update.** The LMCD Summer Deputy Grant funded through Save the Lake contributions resulted in 200 hours of patrol and emergency response during the busiest times this summer. The total number of patrol hours was 620 including In kind hours. There was a strong focus on education within the 469 actions by Hennepin County Water Patrol. Of those actions, there were 63 citations, 2 written warnings, and 395 verbal warnings. Of the 63 citations, 9 were Boating Under Influence (BUI) arrests, 23 were PFD violations, 7 no or slow wake violations, 3 registration, 3 navigation lights, 1 careless operation, and 17 other types. Summer 2019 enforcement actions were up 39 percent from Summer 2018. There were no deaths on Lake Minnetonka this summer and only one large incident involving a boat fire. We appreciate the collaboration of everyone in helping promote safety and quality of life for all those who want to enjoy the lake.

## APPLICATIONS (July 1- October 31, 2019)

- **Caribbean Marina and Restaurant.** In November, a reconfiguration of the multiple dock facility was approved by the Board in November. While the perimeter of the facility remains the same, the approved plan provides for wider walkways, improved internal navigation, and more consistent boat storage units. The number of boat slips will decrease from 147 to 116. Transient slips are not intended at this time.
- **870 Windjammer Lane.** In November, the LMCD Board approved two variances for 870 Windjammer Lane for dock length and side setback.
- **5345 Cedar Point Road.** In June, the LMCD Board approved two variances at 5435 Cedar Point Road for dock length and side setback.
- **City of Excelsior.** In October, the LMCD Board approved an expansion of a deicing area for the City of Excelsior for winter storage of an additional charter boat.