

Your Lake Needs You

The delicate ecological balance of Lake Agawam has been upset by everyday human activities – fertilizing our lawns, flushing our toilets and driving our cars. The Village & Town of Southampton are working to address many of the stormwater problems around the lake, but this alone cannot restore the lake's health. As all of our actions are responsible for the lake's decline, it will take everyone's help to improve its health. Here are some suggestions:

✓ **FERTILIZE WISELY**

- Use minimal amounts of fertilizers and pesticides, preferably non-toxic organic varieties (e.g. compost, horticultural oils, etc.) and refrain from fertilizing within 125' of the lake.

✓ **MAINTAIN YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM**

- Have it inspected every 1-2 years and pumped, as needed.
- Don't use additives or pour chemicals down the drain (e.g. paint thinner, disinfectants, pesticides).

✓ **MINIMIZE HARMFUL STORMWATER RUNOFF**

- Pick up after your dog
- Clean up any spilled fertilizer or chemicals that fall on hard surfaces.

✓ **RESTORE VEGETATED BUFFERS**

- Don't mow in the buffer zone, unless permitted for habitat management.
- Maintain a 50' natural buffer of trees, shrubs or wildflowers between your lawn and the lake.
- Try some of our native planting suggestions inside this pamphlet!

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An Owner's Guide

Lake Agawam It's Your Lake

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Your Lake's Health is Fragile

For decades, Lake Agawam has been a jewel of Southampton. Uniquely situated just feet away from the Atlantic Ocean, this coastal water body provides valuable opportunities for recreational enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation. Unfortunately, Lake Agawam has reached a threshold where pollutants from roadways, fertilizers from lawns and impacts from septic systems have caused problems with water quality, and on a few occasions, even fish die-offs.



The lake is home to several species of fish, various birds and waterfowl. Poor water quality has a severe impact on wildlife, as well as recreational activities.



Your Lake Needs Help

Many human activities (i.e. over-fertilization of lawns, use of septic systems, pet waste, wildfowl populations, impervious roadways) pollute the sensitive waters of Lake Agawam. Nutrient pollution comes from an overabundance of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the waterbody from our yards and runoff. Too many nutrients can cause an imbalance in the lake and lead to massive blooms of algae, which can harm the lake ecosystem. Large algal blooms block sunlight from reaching underwater plants, which provide food and shelter for wildlife. Dying algae also lower levels of dissolved oxygen in the water through biological decomposition. This can result in fish kills, impact recreational activities due to unsightly residue and pungent odor, as well as cause public health concerns associated with some harmful algal species.

Primary sources of pollution are:

- Stormwater from roads and parking lots, which sends lawn fertilizers, sediments, pesticides, roadway grease and trash into storm drains, which then empty directly into the lake.
- Animal wastes, fertilizers and pesticides within close proximity to the lake.
- Septic tanks that are improperly located too near the lake or high groundwater.



You can help address some of these issues. Consider restoring native buffers around the lake.

Habitats & Recommended Plantings

Meadow – Butterfly Garden



Herbaceous Plants

Early Goldenrod (*Solidago juncea*)
 Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
 Blue Vervain (*Verbena hastata*)
 New York Aster (*Symphyotricum novi-belgii*)
 Wild Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)
 Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)

Grasses

Switch Grass (*Panicum virgatum*)
 Little Bluestem (*Shizachyrium scoparium*)
 Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)
 Panicgrass (*Panicum amarum*)
 Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
 Purple Lovegrass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*)

Aquascape – Wet Meadow



Shrubs

Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*)
 Swamp Rose (*Rosa palustris*)
 Pussy Willow (*Salix discolor*)
 Silky Dogwood (*Cornus amomum*)
 Red-osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)
 Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)
 Red Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*)
 Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
 Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*)

Herbaceous Plants

Arrow Arum (*Peltandra virginica*)
 Hop Sedge (*Carex lupulina*)
 Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*)
 Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
 Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)
 Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium dubium*)
 Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
 Monkey Flower (*Mimulus ringens*)
 Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*)

Native Buffers can be Beautiful and Diverse!

Buffers are a band of protective vegetation along the edge of a body of water. Naturally occurring plants usually include trees, shrubs and tall, coarse grasses. This stretch of vegetation “buffers” the vulnerable lake and its water from harmful pollutants flowing across the landscape after a rainfall or snow melt. These non-point source pollutants also include eroded soil from poorly vegetated banks. Well-rooted vegetation holds the banks of the lake in place, stabilizing the soil. Roots also absorb water and some of the contaminants, while the above-ground portions of the plants slow the flow of polluted runoff, allowing the water to seep into the ground, where it is filtered and cleaned. Additionally, buffers provide food and habitat for a variety of wildlife, including birds, butterflies, and even fish when the plants drape over into the water.

To establish a buffer along your shoreline, you can choose from a wide variety of native plants to enhance the natural beauty of your landscape, provide food and habitat for wildlife, as well as help remediate the water quality of Lake Agawam. Consider choosing plants from among these illustrated habitat types to achieve your desired look.

Planted buffers of up to 50 feet are strongly encouraged and fertilization of lawns within 125 feet of the lake is discouraged. Your efforts will help restore and protect Lake Agawam.

Invasive Plants to Avoid

Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*)
 Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
 Running Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*)
 Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
 Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
 Border Privet (*Ligustrum obtusifolium*)
 Honeysuckles (*Lonicera japonica*, *L. mackii*, *L. morrowii*, *L. tatarica*, *L. bella*, *L. xylostemum*.)
 Autumn Olive (*Eleagnus umbellata*)
 Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
 Sycamore Maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
 Asiatic Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
 Porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)
 Myrtle (*Vinca minor*)

Woodland Plantings & Further Information

Woodland



Trees

Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
 Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
 Red Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*)
 Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)
 Tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
 Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*)
 Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)
 Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styracifolia*)
 American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)

Shrubs

Shadbush (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
 Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)
 Arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*)
 Blueberry (*Vaccinium sp.*)
 Pink Azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*)
 Silky Dogwood (*Cornus amomum*)
 Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*)
 Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*)
 Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)

Additional Information:

- To combat invasive plants along your shoreline, consider hand pulling or pruning. For more intensive management of invasives, contact the Village to obtain advice and a permit.
- Immediately revegetate any bare or sparse soil areas with a native wildflower seed mix. Consider a mixed species packet of trees or shrubs from **NYS Saratoga Tree Nursery** www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9391.html
- A permit from the Village of Southampton is required to conduct any clearing, grading, landscaping, fertilization, or other disturbance within 125 feet of Lake Agawam, and the Town Trustees must be contacted to permit any activity within the Lake.
- For more information on native vegetation and invasive species, visit:
 - **Invasive Plant Council of New York State**
<http://www.ipcnys.ene.com/>
 - **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County** – Horticulture
<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/suffolk>
 - **Village of Southampton**
<http://www.southamptonvillage.org/>
 - **Town of Southampton**
<http://www.town.southampton.ny.us/>