

LAKE ALEXANDER PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2015

Dear Lake Association Members,

Autumn 2015

Allow me to begin by saying year 2 of the bogs, fortunately, did NOT materialize?! Fall is again creeping up on us and the beautiful colors should be here within 10 days–2 weeks, so I

hope all of you get to take advantage of that. As I've said before in this newsletter, this is, at

least for me, the best time of the year on Lake Alexander! Water levels have dropped somewhat but may be a bit higher than at this time last year, so around normal I would venture a guess. We will have our final Board meeting for the year during October, but again, there really isn't much new to report. As previously, we will post our meeting minutes on our new website which can be found at www.minnesotawaters.org where you click on the link on the left for Lakes and River Groups, and then click on L for Lake Alexander Property Owners Association. Kindly make use of the website as we maintain it for your benefit, our Association (and LALID) members.

There haven't been any pressing issues this fall, at least not any that have been to the attention of myself, or other Board members. There was water testing this summer carried out by the MN DNR to test for the presence of zebra mussel veligers, but all tests came back negative; that is very good news indeed, but let's not let ourselves get ahead of things and assume we aren't going to get these nasty invasive species, since they have been confirmed in Fish Trap Lake... Again, I would ask if there are other issues you would like addressed, kindly bring them to the attention of myself or one of the LAPOA Board members (see the list in this newsletter for contact information), and we'll be certain to bring them up at an upcoming Board meeting.

In closing Association friends, this will be the final word from your LAPOA President for the 2015 campaign. I hope we'll see some of you around this fall and winter, and for those not returning until next spring, best wishes for a fine fall, winter and spring, we wish you all an enjoyable school year. Thank you as always for your continued membership and support of the Lake Alexander Property Owners Association!

Dr. Bill Faber, President

LAKE ALEXANDER PROPERTY OWNERS BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Bill Faber .....	.575-2328	Dave Schleichert .....	.575-3153
Darline Molde .....	.575-2200	Matt Skjonsby .....	.575-2961
Bob Andersen .....	.575-2178 or (952) 903-0005	Alice Sunde .....	.575-2214
Jerrid Sandstrom .....	.320-493-7030	Tom Trutwin .....	.575-3302
Chuck Schiemo .....	.575-3169		

Mission Statement: To act as stewards of Lake Alexander in regards to water quality, fish management, and shore line conservation.

Fall 2015 LID

Feels like an extended summer with the late Labor Day this year but as the temperature and leaves begin to drop it is time for an update on Lake Alexander Lake Improved District ("LA-LID") activities and concerns.

At our annual meeting in July the LALID board and littoral property owners voted to accept the 2016 budget and maintain our current \$200 per lakefront property owner real estate tax assessment for next year. This is the same amount assessed in 2015 and rebounds from our 2014 low assessment of only \$10 which consequently left us in troubled financial waters and receiving financial aid from the Lake Alexander Property Owners association to help with bog costs—which we are still very grateful for. Recently I received a notice that the \$100 per acre grant funds we had generously received from the DNR in past years would be soon reduced.

At the time of our July meeting we had anticipated treating only around 60+ acres of the invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil ("EWM") weeds. In the next two weeks following the LALID board received notice that the DNR had re-inspected and would permit us up to 125 acres of EWM management. After examining the budget it was decided by the board to go ahead with DNR amendment to our permit. The expanded EWM treatment was performed on Tuesday, August 11, 2015 under favorable weather conditions.

Thankfully the serious bog situation which developed in 2014 did not plague LA property owners in 2015. Only a handful of relatively smaller sized bogs were required to be relocated by our local vendor and staked. This will likely result in costs significantly below budgeted if conditions remain static.

To date we do not have any documented zebra mussels in our lake. Please keep a watch for these invasive critters when pulling our your docks, lifts and rafts in the coming weeks. Early detection and reporting to the LALID board &

DNR is key to successful management. Unfortunately our down stream neighbor Fish Trap Lake found out of a significant infestation of zebra mussels which is already beyond accepted DNR control methods.

Of course many of us are concerned about the environmental case of Lake Mille Lacs, public fishing ban on walleye plus aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels, spiny waterflea, and EWM. Lake Mille Lacs is one of the only lakes in the state where all three of these destructive species are present.

More troubling the MN DNR announced that a new Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) had arrived in Minnesota, called starry stonewort. This invasive algae was just discovered in Koronis and Mud Lakes in both Stearns and Meeker Counties near the public boat launch (sound familiar?). Starry stonewort is destructive and very resistant to chemical treatments. It grows thick enough to obstruct boat traffic, and often takes over spawning beds used by bass and bluegills. In 2006 starry stonewort was first found in Michigan lakes. What seems absent from Minnesota's DNR efforts is a leadership in the Department on this issue. If starry stonewort spreads, spawning grounds will be impacted, and we just might have more lakes go by the way of Mille Lacs.

Lastly "Thanks" go out to our lake neighbor Margaret Flolid of Little Falls, MN who dutifully served on the LAPOA board for 30 years until her resignation this year. Margaret was instrumental in helping to form our LALID ten years ago. Her environmental legacy of care and concern for Lake Alexander actively continues. Well done Margaret!

Ron Wieber
LID Treasurer

View from Headleys Bay

Waking up in the early morning to a loon calling out, as fog, like steam coming off your morning cup of coffee, rises from the surface of the lake. The rising sun is breaking the tree line over the North point, soon to be rising over the South point as the months progress.

Boats are congregating in the bay, another fishing tournament? Folks have asked, what if any rules or guide lines do these tournaments have to follow.

Here's a quick break down of what the DNR requires.

No permit required if:

- 25 boats or less.
- Entry fee of \$25 or less.
- All participants are 18 or younger.
- Total prize of \$500 or less.
- Small contest, 50 or fewer boats a fee of \$60 (weigh-in is located on contest waters)
- Large contest, more than 50 boats a fee of \$200 (weigh-in is located on contest waters)
- Off-site weigh-ins:
 - Small contest \$250
 - Large Contest \$500

Maximum number of permitted fishing contests is determined by lake size. Lake Alexander is in the 2,000 - 4,999 acres range, and is permitted to have 3 (three) contests per month. Maximum number of large contests is 1 (one) per month.

There are a number of other requirements which can be found on the Minnesota DNR website.

Enjoy the Fall season, by far the best of the seasons, for soon the winter winds they be a blowing...

Chuck Schiemo
Board Member

Scandia Valley Township

Town Board Members:

Terry Sandstrom	575-3262
Dale Borgstrom.....	746-3823
Al Card.....	575-3029
Ian Newkirk.....	746-3870
Mike Rosvold	575-2735
Kathie Headley (Clerk)	575-2847
Sara Meier (Treasurer)	575-2783
Scandia Valley Refuse and Recycle Center.....	575-2438
Summer Hours	
Sunday	11:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Prevent Septic System Freezing Problems

The most important concern is cold air entry into the system. Open, broken and uncapped risers or inspection pipes allow cold air into the system and can cause the system to freeze. Other causes of a frozen septic system include outdated or overloaded systems, in the absence of vegetative cover over the system, slow leaking plumbing fixtures, compacted soils, and irregular water use.

Those worried about their system freezing should follow these tips:

- Place 8 to 12 inch layer of mulch over the pipes, tank and soil treatment area to provide extra insulation;
- Make sure all access points to the system are covered. Sealing them and adding insulation is a good idea;
- Use water, the warmer the better. Run the dishwasher, take a hot bath, or spread warm laundry schedule to one load a day, if possible, during cold snaps. Do not leave water running; this will hydraulically overload one's system; and
- Fix any leaky plumbing fixtures or appliances. This will help prevent freezing problems and increase the longevity of the septic system.

In the long term, having a properly designed, installed, maintained and operated system is the best insurance against freezing issues.

Lake Alexander Lake Improvement District Board Members

Dr. Bill Faber, Chairman	575-2338
Ron Wieber, Treasurer	575-3326
Tom Bjorge	575-2553
Chuck Schiemo	575-3169
John Piper	575-3384

Ice Jacking Damage

Record high lake levels in 2014 contributed to extensive shoreline damage from ice. Ice heaving is sometimes called ice-jacking, and can be damaging to property on a lake shore. This powerful natural force forms a feature along the shoreline known as an ice ridge—also known as ice pushes or ramparts. The result may include significant damage to retaining walls, docks and boat lifts, cabins, and public boat launching facilities.

Cause: Ice ridges are caused by the pushing action of a lake's ice sheet against the shore. Cracks form in the ice because of different contraction rates at the top and bottom of the ice sheet. This is specially true in years that the ice sheet lacks an insulating snow cover. Ice cracks also develop because the edges of the ice sheet are sometimes firmly attached to the shore. When water rises in the cracks and freezes, the ice sheet expands slightly. Rising air temperatures warm the ice, leading to additional expansion, which exerts a tremendous thrust against the shore. Alternate warming and cooling of the ice sheet leads to additional pushing action, causing the ice to creep shoreward and scrape, gouge, and push soil and rock into mounds. If a one mile diameter lake's ice temperature rises from 14 to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the ice sheet will expand on to shore about 3 feet. This can occur in a matter of hours when there is no snow cover on the ice sheet to provide insulation.

Benefits: Ice ridges are natural berms that have formed around Minnesota's lakes over thousands of years. These mounds of material provide the lake with ecological benefits by creating a barrier to nutrient loading. Nutrients collect on the landward side of the mound, producing fertile soil where plants and trees thrive. The root systems of this near-shore plant community help to protect the shore from erosion and soak up additional nutrients. Shade and habitat offered by near-shore plants benefit organisms along the shore and in the lake, thus supporting nesting and spawning fish. Ice ridges also work to protect the shore from the lake itself. For example, a small ice ridge formed one year is followed by additional pushes in ensuing years. The ridge is fortified by jamming rocks into it. The roots of the near-shore plant community bind together the soil and rock to form natural shoreline protection.

Shoreline repair: Because ice ridges do provide ecological benefits, one reaction would be to do nothing other than remove personal property from its zone of influence. However, this is often impractical. Ice ridges can impede use of the lake by a property owner or the users of public lakeshore facilities.

Lake access can be obtained by ramping over a cutting through the ice ridge. There are circumstances when it may be necessary to remove or grade an ice ridge. An individual Public Waters Work Permit is not required from the DNR to remove or grade an ice ridge if the work meets

the following conditions:

- The ice ridge resulted from ice action within the last year.
- The project is either exempt from local permits or is authorized by issuance of a local government permit.
- Not more than 200 feet of shoreline is affected.
- All ice ridge material that is composed of muck, clay, or organic sediment is deposited and stabilized at an upland site above the ordinary high-water-level.
- All ice ridge material that is composed of sand or gravel is removed as provided above or graded to conform to the original cross section and alignment of the lakebed, with a finished surface at or below the OHWL.
- No additional excavation or replacement fill material occurs on the site.
- All exposed areas are immediately stabilized as needed to prevent erosion and sedimentation.
- Local zoning officials, the watershed district (if applicable) and the soil and water conservation district are given at least 7 days notice before beginning the project.

Removal or grading of an ice ridge must not disturb emergent aquatic vegetation, unless authorized by an aquatic plant management permit from the DNR's Division of Fisheries.

Prevention: The simplest means of avoiding ice-related damage to shoreline property is to ensure that personal property is out of wrath's path. State and local shoreland regulations requiring setback limits not only lead to improved aesthetics but also help to minimize personal property damage from ice action and wave-induced erosion. If an engineering solution is pursued, property owners should seek the advice of a professional.

More info: The Minnesota DNR has more information on ice jacking, including an informaion sheet on their website at: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watergmt_section/pwpermits/ice_ridges.html.

Legislative Committees

A request was made at the Lake Improvement District Annual Meeting for property owners to contact state legislators, especially those serving on environmental and conservation committees, with a request to provide additional funding for the prevention and treatment of aquatic invasive species.

The web site is <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

Click on this link, and then under the House and Senate tabs on the left of that homepage, click on Committees to see who the respective Chair and members are of ALL committees in respective body (as well as each Committee members' contact information). These are changing, and will change again this winter and spring, before being finalized for the Spring 2016 session.