

Pollution Prevention

Through the Docktalk program, FOCA encourages landowners to protect your lake and property from hazardous materials.

Why? Common products contain toxic ingredients that can endanger your health and the environment.

Hazardous chemicals going into your water

Rain flowing off your yard

Manicured areas act like hard surfaces when it rains and do not offer flood control or protection against erosion. More than 50 per cent of rainfall can run off lawns straight into lakes. Fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste, and other ground-level pollutants get washed into lakes with the runoff.

Fertilizers

Fertilizer gives plants nitrogen and phosphorus. Fertilizer can travel to the lake and give the water an overdose of nutrients that can cause unnatural increased algae and aquatic plant growth. Too much algae blocks the sun from reaching organisms at lower depths. Massive weed beds can clog waterways. And the decay of so much organic material lowers the water's oxygen level, which affects fish and other wildlife.

Pesticides

They poison more than pests. Wind and rainfall can carry pesticide across land and into water where its toxic effects impact water quality and wildlife. Children and pets are most susceptible to pesticide poisoning. Beneficial species, like dragonflies and birds, can be killed or harmed. Note: Some pesticides made from natural sources can be toxic to humans and wildlife, too.

Gasoline and oil spills, leaks

Oil and gas are often spilled when boaters fill tanks or perform their own engine maintenance. Oil and gas are hazardous materials that contaminate land and water, even small amounts can cause harm.

Hazardous chemicals going into your air

Burning wood and garbage

Wood-burning fires that create a lot of smoke, pollute the air. Smoke is created from incomplete combustion, such as burning wet or unseasoned wood. Burning garbage sends toxic materials into the air that later return to earth as particulates or in water drops, then enter the food chain. Toxins include dioxins, furans, benzene, mercury, and PCBs.

Pollution can be any substance that causes a negative impact to the environment, economy, or society. Too much of a naturally occurring substance can become pollution (e.g. phosphorus in sediments) as much as one introduced by human activity (e.g. phosphorus from fertilizers).

► Find out what you can do to prevent pollution...

HOW ?

FOCA encourages landowners to prevent pollutants from entering the lakeside environment.

Enjoy a natural shoreline

Native species have inherent pest resistance and adaptations to local conditions so they don't need fertilizers or pesticides. Native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees absorb and filter rainwater as it runs off your property, and prevent the shore eroding. (See FOCA's Natural Shorelines fact sheet.)

Sit back and put nature to work for you

Use natural care techniques; they focus on healthy soil, choosing the best plants for your area, and making nature look after itself. Consider alternative ground covers for active-use areas, and keep mowed areas to a minimum.

Burn dry, seasoned wood only

Avoid putting toxic chemicals into the air: Burn wood, not household garbage. Dry wood burns cleaner. Small pieces combust better because they have more surface area.

Be a good boater

Perform repairs and fill gas tanks away from the water. Use spill-prevention equipment. Cover the ground where maintenance is done, and use drip pans during engine work. Use non-toxic bilge cleaners or bilge cloths. Dispose of waste oil at hazardous waste facilities.

Reduce waste

Whatever comes to the cottage has to leave somehow. Reduce garbage significantly with reusable products (e.g. plates, bags, mugs). Buy items in as little packaging as possible, preferably recyclable packaging.

Properly dispose of hazardous waste

Oil, solvents, paint, batteries, and many cleaning products have hazardous ingredients so they need special disposal at hazardous waste depots. Find out who accepts hazardous waste near your cottage or take it home to your local hazardous disposal facility.

For more information contact:

FOCA
 #201-159 King Street
 Peterborough, ON
 K9J 2R8
 705.749.3622
 info@foca.on.ca

Resources online:

www.foca.on.ca
www.ec.gc.ca/cppic
www.gca.ca
www.burnitsmart.org
www.cleanboater.com
www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/pubs/pme/menu.htm
www.wdo.ca
www.myfootprint.org

Your local contact:

This fact sheet is sponsored by: