



Lake Shirley Association
“The Eagle Newsletter”
Spring 2026



Visit us at www.lakeshirley.com

Dear Lake Shirley Members and Residents,

As President of the Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the important work accomplished in 2025 and to extend my sincere gratitude to all who continue to support the preservation and enjoyment of our beautiful lake community.

This year was one of significant progress in protecting the long-term health of Lake Shirley. In 2025, the Board of Directors worked closely with the Lunenburg Conservation Commission and Shirley Conservation Commission to obtain the necessary approvals to treat fanwort within the lake using Sonar herbicide treatment. Following regulatory approval, three treatments were successfully completed during the season.

I am pleased to report that the treatment was highly successful. The fanwort infestation had become a serious threat and was rapidly taking over large portions of the body of water, making this treatment a necessity to preserve the lake for recreation, navigation, and ecosystem health.

The total cost of this treatment was approximately \$230,000. This was a major undertaking, and I want to sincerely thank everyone who contributed financially and supported this effort to preserve Lake Shirley for future generations.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the entire LSIC Board of Directors. Every member of the Board volunteers their time and energy throughout the year. The more hands we have, the easier it is to accomplish the many important tasks required to maintain our lake community.

Our work extends far beyond treatment alone. Throughout the year, the Board remains actively engaged in:

- Monitoring water quality through regular testing and ongoing algae surveillance
- Managing the dam and lake levels in compliance with the Order of Conditions
- Installing, monitoring, and replacing navigation buoys
- Coordinating pre-treatment spring surveys, summer lake treatment plans, and post-treatment surveys
- Submitting required reports to both Conservation Commissions
- Researching and applying for state grant opportunities
- Hosting our Annual Meeting and monthly Director Meetings, held every second Wednesday
- Partnering with the Towns of Lunenburg, Massachusetts and Shirley, Massachusetts to promote lake health
- Educating the public through newsletters, our website, and shared community resources

In addition to protecting the lake's ecosystem, we are proud to continue the many community traditions that make Lake Shirley such a special place to live. From the Boat Parade to fireworks, cornhole tournaments, golf tournaments, social gatherings, and my personal favorite, Light Up Lake Shirley, these events bring our community together all year long.

Thanks to your annual membership contributions, LSIC raised over \$40,000 this year, and those funds go directly back into maintaining and improving the lake. Without your continued support, we would not be able to fund these essential programs, hire environmental consultants, complete lake surveys, or continue the treatment and monitoring work necessary to keep our water healthy.

I feel truly thankful and blessed to live in a lake community that cares so deeply and willingly contributes to maintaining a strong and healthy water ecosystem for all to enjoy, from summer water sports to winter activities.

Thank you for your continued support, volunteerism, and commitment to Lake Shirley.

As always, my favorite quote: ***“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” Dr. Seuss***

With sincere appreciation,

Joanna Bilotta, President, Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation

Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation
P.O. Box 567
Shirley, MA 01464

Annual Meeting Agenda

Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd, Shirley, MA 01464.

1. Roll of Officers and Directors. (Justine Morgan)
2. Determination of a quorum of 21 paid members. (Susan Jewell, Membership)
3. Proof of meeting notice ~ spring 2026 Newsletter. (Joanna Bilotta, President)
4. Reading of minutes of the Wednesday, May 7, 2025, Annual Meeting. (Ashley Coffin)
5. Presentations:
 - a. Dominic Meringolo, Solitude Lake Management
 - b. Wendy Gendron, Aquatic Restoration Consulting
 - c. Environmental Police, New Massachusetts Boater Safety Law
6. Reports of Officers and Committees
 - I. Treasurer/Secretary
 - II. Vegetation and Algae Management (Joanna Bilotta)
 - III. Water Quality (Steve Vitone)
 - IV. Dam & Safety (Richie Patry & Ron Wilson)
 - V. Website/Facebook (Jay Ellowitz, Deb Yawor, Caitlin Katisch, & Jay Simeone)
 - VI. Membership (Susan Jewell)
7. Unfinished Business.
8. New Business.
9. Report of nominating committee and nominations from the floor for the election of Directors and other officers
10. Vote for Secretary and Treasurer
11. Nomination and Vote for Board of Directors
12. Adjournment

*Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the 2024 newly elected Board of Directors will meet:

1. To elect the President, Vice President

***Solitude Lake Management
Submitted by Dominic Meringolo***

***Lake Shirley – Survey and Treatment Plan
2025 Management Program Summary***

Program Task	Date Completed
Received Approved License to Apply Chemicals	April 14, 2025
Initial Fluridone Herbicide Treatment	April 29, 2025
Inspection and herbicide testing	May 12 & May 28, 2025
1st Follow-Up Fluridone Treatment	May 28, 2025
Inspection and herbicide testing	June 11, 2025
2nd (Final) Fluridone Treatment	June 19, 2025
Inspection and herbicide testing	June 25, July 21, August 21, September 22, 2025

Pre-Treatment Survey

Given that the fluridone treatments were planned to start early in the season, no formal pre-treatment survey was conducted this year. The treatment plan for 2025 was based on vegetation data from the last several years, especially the September 2024 survey conducted by Aquatic Restoration Consulting (ARC).

Herbicide Treatment

The goal of the 2025 treatment program was to maintain a target dose of 5-8 parts per billion (ppb) of fluridone throughout the lake for at least 90 days while reaching a peak concentration of 10-12 ppb somewhere between the 30 and 60 day point. This concentration regime is required to provide effective, multiple year control of fanwort and help to reduce or “regulate” the abundance of native vegetation. In order to achieve this, a series of applications using both pellet and liquid formulations of Sonar (fluridone) herbicide was proposed.

The initial herbicide application was conducted using the Sonar ONE herbicide on April 19th. The timing of the initial treatment was proposed to coincide with the start of active fanwort growth as this is the time when plants are most sensitive. While the dose for this treatment was calculated over the entire volume of the lake, the product was applied only to the ~150-acre littoral zone. The lakewide dose applied was 12 ppb which was anticipated to be released over a 4-6 week period.

As with all treatments, the lake community and the two towns were notified prior to treatment by LSIC. Several means of notification were utilized: placement of a written notice in the newspaper(s); placement of large, printed signs at major road intersections/locations around the lake and posting of numerous 8.5 inch by 11-inch orange colored, printed signs around the lake shoreline and other means of communication/notification.

The treatment was performed with a 20-foot airboat equipped with an electric spreader to distribute the pellets to the pre-determined treatment areas. GPS guidance was used to monitor the position of the boat and its relation to the treatment areas. The treatment proceeded smoothly and without any issues. Figure 1 shows the actual application areas and GPS recorded treatment tracks. A summary of the treatment specifications is shown below in Table 1.

Treatment Date	April 29
Product	Sonar ONE (fluridone)
Treatment	Area 354 acres (Herbicide applied to 150 acre littoral zone)
Quantity	1,600 lbs
GPS Tracks	See Figure 1
Applicator name	Rocco Notaro, MA Certification #AL-0053966
Site Conditions	Weather: Fair, winds 10-15 MPH SW, mid 70’s°F Water Temp: 16.1°C at surface, 15.8°C near bottom Dissolved Oxygen: 10.27 mg/l at surface; 10.16 mg/l near bottom (9-feet) Water clarity: 7’

Continuing reading at: <https://www.lakeshirley.com/resources>

Aquatic Restoration Consultants, LLC.
Submitted by Wendy Gendron

INTRODUCTION

The Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation (LSIC) contracted Aquatic Restoration Consulting, LLC (ARC) to perform the fall aquatic plant survey and summarize the lake management activities that occurred during the prior year (October 15, 2024 through October 14, 2025) in accordance with the Order of Conditions (MassDEP File No. 208-1168 for the Town of Lunenburg and 284- 0474 for the Town of Shirley). This report summarizes the LSIC management activities, data evaluation, and recommendations. The report is organized in a semi-chronological order of activities for the 2024-2025 compliance year:

- winter water level drawdown,
- water quality monitoring,
- herbicide/algaecide treatment,
- fall aquatic plant survey and prior year data comparison,
- education and outreach activities; and
- recommended changes (if appropriate) from the management program.

WINTER WATER LEVEL DRAWDOWN

Purpose and Mechanism of Drawdown Seasonal winter drawdown is an established aquatic plant management strategy at Lake Shirley. Drawdown works by exposing littoral-zone sediments and rooted plant crowns to extended dry and freezing conditions, which desiccate tissues and limit regrowth during the subsequent growing season. Ice formation, ice scour, and mechanical movement across exposed substrates provide additional control.

Effectiveness varies annually because weather and hydrologic conditions influence the degree of sediment exposure. Frequent rain, fluctuating water levels, insulating early snowpack, or groundwater seepage can reduce freeze penetration and limit desiccation. Substrate type is also important; mucky or peaty sediments common in cove areas retain moisture and offer plants greater protection.

Historical Use and Management Context

Winter drawdown has been used at Lake Shirley for many years as a primary tool to control nuisance aquatic vegetation. The Metcalf & Eddy Diagnostic–Feasibility Study originally recommended a drawdown of up to nine feet, but this depth was later limited to six feet due to documented impacts on shallow private wells. Even at the six-foot limit, drawdown has substantially reduced nuisance growth of milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum* and *M. spicatum*) and fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) within the shallow margins of the lake. Plants that propagate by seed or winter buds (e.g., *Vallisneria*, pondweeds, naiads) are less affected and may rebound during favorable years. As expected, vegetation growing deeper than the drawdown contour (>6 ft) is generally unaffected.

Consistent implementation of the winter drawdown reduces herbicide dependence and provides a non-chemical means of long-term plant suppression.

Annual Drawdown Procedures and Monitoring

The Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation (LSIC) aims to achieve a seasonal drawdown of up to six feet each year. The process begins by opening the two dam gates on or after October 15.

Continuing reading at: <https://www.lakeshirley.com/resources>

P. PERFOLIATUS



P. GRAMINEUS



EUROPEAN NAIAD



EURASIAN MILFOIL



VARIABLE MILFOIL



FANWORT



PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE



CURLY-LEAVE PONDWEED



Lake Shirley Dam and Water Level Information

On October 15, we opened both valves at the dam to begin the 2025 draw down. We achieved this year's target of a 4- to 6-foot draw down by December 1. Given the unusually cold fall, we are optimistic that the draw down resulted in significant weed reduction. The lake was refilled on April 5, 2026, at which time water was flowing over the spillway. Lunenburg Conservation and Shirley Conservation were notified on April 5, 2026, that Lake Shirley had refilled and water was flowing over the spillway. Special thanks to Ritchie Patry for his assistance with the dam.

Please note that the draw down begins each year on October 15. Please remove all boats from the water and, if necessary, remove docks, as lake levels can drop quickly.

Thank You
Ron Wilson & Richie Patry
Lake Shirley Dam Keepers

Drawdown

- 1. The target drawdowns are to be up to 6 feet and the achieved depth will naturally vary based on variations in precipitation during the drawdown period.**
- 2. The data collection on lake levels and stream flows are to be gathered no less than weekly between October 1 and April 15 and submitted with the Annual Report**
- 3. Commence drawdown on or after October 15th.**
- 4. Achieve the target drawdown depth by or before December 1st**
- 5. Achieve full lake level by April 1st.**
- 6. Keep outflow during drawdown below a discharge equivalent to 57.2 cs unless the water is flowing over the spillway. Once the target water level is achieved, match outflow to inflow to the greatest extent possible, maintaining a stable water level.**
- 7. Keep outflow during refill above a discharge equivalent to 7.15 cfs.**
- 8. Any resident concerns with wells should be reported to the LCC who will take appropriate action. The LSIC shall refer all residents to the LCC for issues concerning wells.**
- 9. The Tests shall take place between January 15 and March 1 as allowed by ice safety. A dissolved oxygen profile should be performed at the one of the deepest locations on the lake and graphed from surface to the bottom showing dissolved O2 level and temperature.**

The Lake Shirley Website: www.Lakeshirley.com

The Lake Shirley Improvement Corp website:

<https://www.lakeshirley.com/>

The Lake Shirley website continues to serve as an important resource for residents and members by providing access to lake management updates, meeting information, reports, and community events. As we look ahead, the Website Committee is focused on enhancing the site to make it more user-friendly, visually engaging, and interactive.

We are exploring new ways to highlight lake activities, showcase photos, share community stories, and provide timely updates on water quality and upcoming events. Our goal is to ensure the website reflects the vibrant spirit of Lake Shirley while remaining a valuable and informative tool for all.

We encourage members and residents to be part of this effort by sharing photos, stories, and updates. Your contributions will help bring the website to life and strengthen our sense of community.

Email: Click on the “Contact” page to register your email to receive informational LSIC emails. Emailing our members is the most convenient communication tool that allows us to distribute the most up-to-date information on what’s happening on Lake Shirley. Such as weed and algae treatments, draw down, lake events, and general news. You can also update and confirm your email with LSIC to receive newsletters by email instead of postal mail. This helps reduce our operating costs and saves on paper and postage, not to mention saving time as all paper mailings are done by volunteers.

PayPal: A convenient time saving way to submit your donations online, anytime, day or night. Using PayPal also helps reduce costs by reducing the number of donation requests that need to be mailed out. Please consider using PayPal, located on the membership page.

Jay Simeone,
Website Manager

<https://www.lakeshirley.com>



FACEBOOK

Managed by Caitlin Katisch:

Be sure to follow us on Facebook for the latest Lake Shirley news and events! We post regularly about events, updates on weed and algae treatments, local news, photos, and much more! Do you have an idea for a community event or fundraiser for Lake Shirley? Please contact us! Our Facebook page can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/LakeShirleyMA/>



4th of July Parade

The 4th of July Boat Parade is looking for a new organizer! Thank you to all the participants, spectators, and shoreline judging teams who came out to support the 2025 Lake Shirley 4th of July parade.



CONGRATULATIONS THE KOHLSTROM FAMILY

Congratulations to Mr. Lacaste for winning the 50/50!

More information to follow!

Light up Lake Shirley Boat Parade & Annual Lake Shirley Benefit Golf Tournament

The Light Up Lake Shirley & Golf Tournament Fundraising Committee managed and hosted these 2 spectacular events, last year raising \$18,204 profit. A phenomenal show of support by our Lake community! We are grateful to this committee and the community for supporting these successful events. Please join us in 2026 and continue your support to our fundraising efforts and fun events on Lake Shirley!

“Light Up Lake Shirley” Boat Parade and Shoreline Light

Spectacular! Saturday, August 15th! The Boat Parade will start at 8:15 p.m. Please participate and help us by getting your boats, shoreline and docks glowing!! This is a great family and community event.

Lake Shirley Golf Tournament will be held at the Westminster Country Club on Saturday, September 19. Shotgun Start at Noon. If you don't play golf, no worries, please join us for the community dinner following the tournament.

We look forward to seeing you all on 8/15 and 9/19!

THANK YOU, FROM THE LSIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS! 2025 PAID MEMBERS

Alsfeld	Eric	Gormley	Robert & Gloria	Peck	Matthew
Apollonio	Ben & Sara	Gormley	Michael	Pelletier	Dave
Arpano	Theresa	Grace	Patrick & Beth	Perkins	Mary
Baker	Paul & Janet	Griffin	Shannon	Perkins	Kevin
Baker	Paul and Mary	Griffis	Caroline	Perko	Sandra
Balducci	Susan & Peter	Hale	Tim & Tina	Pirro	Nicholas
Beers	Marcia	Hantschar	Anna	Polcari	Anthony & Janice
Bell	Nanci	Harbor Classic	Adams, James	Rahaim	Nancy
Benjamin	Scott	Hart	David & Maureen	Rainville	Rene
Bergeron	Francis	Helstowski	Constance	Ramondelli	Jacalyn
Bilotta	Jane	Hitzenbuhler	Sean & Cory	Reinhart	Scott
Bilotta, Joanna	Simeone, Jay	Holman	Irene	Reinhart	Glen & Kathleen
Brisson	Brian & Liz	Howard	John & Arlene	Rhee	Yun J.
Bunting	Kenneth & Dawn	Huse/Storm	Andrew	Richard	Jeffrey & Lisa
Burton	Mary	Jackson	Sandra	Ritchie	Brian & Cynthia
Cadaret	Paul & Shrayl	Jalbert	John	Rivard	Steven
Casto	Anthony & Kimberly	Jewell	Perry & Sue	Robison	Chris
Caswell	Tim	Katisch	Nathan & Caitlin	Ropiak	Gary & Susan
Champagne	Daniel & Joanne	Keatings		Rossley	Scott
Chandler-Smith	Nuri	Kincaid	Patrick	Roux	Jason
Chadwick/Malady	David/Nancy	Kirkpatrick	Ryan	Ryder	Brian & Kelly
Chenis	Kenneth	Kirouac	Scott	Salamone	Anthony & Debbie
Cila	Cheryl & Vincent	Kodzis	Raymond & Sally	Spindt	Gary & Maureen
Coffin, Chris	Shady Point	Kohlstrom	Casavecchia	Sprague	Marc & Christine
Cole, Todd	Braun, Ashley	Koronis	Peter & Lillian	Stone	Mark & Lisa
Collins	Brian & Victoria	Kroll	Gary & Tina	Sullivan	Paul & Brenda
Coolen, David	Plankey	Kuehl	Troy	Swenson/DeGrace	Joel & Jessica
Couture	George & Linda	Kullberg	Alan & Christine	Tata	John & Louise
Cote	Caryn & Judith	LaBranche	Dennis & Carol	Tessier/Comesana	Roxanne/Lawrence
Dailey	Ralph & Matthew	Langenbacher	Kathleen	Tousignant	Justin
DeFazio	Michael	Lavoie	James & Joanne	Tower	Brian & Karen
DeFazio	Joshua & Sydney	Lawless	Bart & Gale	Tucker	John
DeFazio	Richard	Lovewell	Mike & Tammy	Tufts	Michael & Denise
DeGeorge	Christopher & Suzann	Marchetti	Robert	Turgeon	Denis & Karen
DeLaite	Deborah	Mayotte	Michael & Kelly	Valente	Paula
Derner	Carl & Joy	McAllister	Robert & Diane	Vella	Mark & Diane
Dorsey	Jim & Susan	McCaffrey	Kelly	Vitone	Thomas
Dumbelton	William & Janet	McCarthy, Melissa	Vitone, Steve	Viviano	Robert & Judith
Ellowitz	Jay	Magurn	Arthur & Joanne	Viviano	Jeffrey & Renee
Farley	Adam & Monica	McNiff	Virginia	Watt	David
Farrow	Shawn	Merkel	Peter	White	Steve
Fassbender	Thomas & Cece	Mitrano	Mike	Whitten	Mark & Casey
Flagg	Steven & Julie	Monaco	Family	Widdowson	Martin & Janice
Fortin	Anne Marie	Monaco	Desiree	Williams	Fred & Claudette
Fortin, Joe	DeLollis, Diane	Moore	Francis	Williams	Gary
Fournier	J & F	Naparstek	Walter	Wilson	Ron & Robin
Gallagher	John & Annette	Nuthman	Conrad	Wolfram	Virginia
Gee	Mike & Cindylee	Osoff	David	Wu	Thomas & Alice
Gerante	Cynthia	Patry	Richard & Kathleen	Wysk	Danuta
Godfrey	Walter & Lorie	Payne	Tom & Melanie	Yapp, George	Wicox, Susan
Goguen	Paul	Pearson	Richard	Yawor	Alex & Deb
Gonthier	Denise				

LSIC DUES PAYMENT

- LSIC offers an online payment through PayPal. All you need to do is go to the membership page at www.lakeshirley.com and click on PayPal to make your payment.
- The LSIC is willing to work with people for partial payments or monthly payments, as long as you are paid in full by the annual meeting where you will be a member with voting rights.
- You may also continue to pay by check. Make sure to enclose the tear-off slip below with your payment.
- The LSIC needs to receive your payment by the time of the annual meeting to enable you to vote at the annual meeting. Please try to pay as soon as possible as we are putting together the budget for this year's work and we need to know what we can afford to take on to continue to manage the quality of our Lake for the summer season.

LSIC 2026 ANNUAL DUES

Please check the appropriate category and payment amount:

- Single-family home \$300
- Multiple homes \$450
- Business \$600

Name: _____

Lake Address

Street: _____

Town: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Mailing Address (If different than Lake Address)

Street: _____

Town: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

EMAIL: _____

Harmful Algal Blooms in Freshwater Bodies



ARE ALGAL BLOOMS HARMFUL?

Algal blooms can be harmful to people and animals. Cyanobacteria (sometimes called blue-green algae) occur naturally in freshwater. Under certain conditions, they can multiply quickly, creating a highly concentrated area known as a cyanobacterial harmful algal bloom, or cyanobacteria harmful algal bloom (cyanobacteria HAB). Some HABs produce toxins (known as cyanotoxins). In 2021, HABs in the U.S. were reported to have caused:

- 117 cases of human illness
- 2,715 cases of animal illness
- 2,489* animal fatalities - *large mortality event affecting 2,000 bats

HABs in Massachusetts are most common in summer and early fall. They can last from several days to several months.

HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE IS A HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM IN THE WATER?

Cyanobacteria can cause the water to appear slightly discolored, cloudy, or resemble pea soup or paint. Typically blue or green, HABs can also be brown or red and can give water a bad odor. In some blooms cyanobacteria are dispersed throughout the water, while in other blooms they are concentrated in a scum or mat, either on the surface of the water or in sediment along the shoreline.

WHAT CAUSES CYANOBACTERIA TO GROW?

Certain environmental conditions, such as warm weather, sunlight, excess nutrients, and stagnant/slow-moving waters help cyanobacteria grow faster. Specific factors behind each bloom vary because every waterbody is different. However, two of the most common factors are phosphorus and nitrogen, found in fertilizers and human/animal waste.

HOW ARE HUMANS AND ANIMALS EXPOSED TO CYANOBACTERIA?

People and animals can be exposed to cyanobacteria through direct skin contact, ingestion, or inhalation. Those using the water for active recreation (like swimmers or jet-skiers) or for drinking are most likely to be exposed. Children and pets, who are more likely to get these bacteria in their mouths, are of special concern. Dogs can become very ill and even die from licking cyanobacteria off their fur.

Cyanotoxins (if present) are usually contained within the cyanobacteria cell. When the cells die, the toxins are released into the water where they can be ingested. Cyanotoxins are not absorbed through the skin.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT A HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM?

If you see a possible HAB, avoid contact with the water.

Contact your local health department if the bloom is at a recreational waterbody. If the suspected bloom is at a drinking water reservoir, contact the local water department and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

WHEN IN DOUBT, STAY OUT!

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE HEALTH EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH CYANOBACTERIA?

Health effects associated with blooms vary depending on the type of cyanobacteria, the route of exposure, and the amount of toxins present.

- Ingestion is the primary concern. Ingesting small amounts of cyanobacteria or toxin can cause gastrointestinal symptoms. Ingesting large amounts of toxins may cause liver or neurological damage.
- Contact with cyanobacteria can cause skin or eye irritation.
- Inhaling water spray containing cyanobacteria can cause asthma-like symptoms.
- Small children and pets are more susceptible to the effects of toxins than adults.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM EXPOSED TO CYANOBACTERIA?

During a bloom, DPH recommends avoiding contact with the water.

If contact occurs, wash yourself and your pet with tap or bottled water. If you or your pet swallows water, call your doctor or veterinarian. If you believe you or your pet is experiencing adverse health effects, contact your doctor or veterinarian immediately.

WHAT ASSISTANCE CAN DPH PROVIDE?

DPH can provide guidance and technical assistance regarding reported blooms and health effects. DPH recommends that the managing entity (typically local health, or a local or state parks department) issue an advisory if any of the following criteria is met:

- A visible scum is present.
- The algal cell count exceeds 70,000 cells/milliliter of water.
- The level of the toxin microcystin is 8 parts per billion (ppb) or higher.
- The level of the toxin cylindrospermopsin is 15 parts per billion (ppb) or higher.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ELIMINATE AN ALGAL BLOOM?

Unfortunately, once a bloom appears there are few options besides letting it run its natural course. Blooms depend on available nutrients and optimal weather conditions. Chemical treatment methods (such as algacides) are not recommended during a bloom.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS?

There are a number of best management practices that can reduce bloom-promoting nutrients:

- Maintain septic systems and storm drains
- Reduce application of fertilizer
- Pick up pet waste
- Do not feed ducks or geese
- Plant or maintain native vegetation around the water's edge

For more information contact:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Climate & Environmental Health | Environmental Toxicology Program
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-624-5757 | Fax: 617-624-5183 | TTY: 617-624-5286
www.mass.gov/dph/algae



Additional Resources:

MA Dept. of Env. Protection: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/cyanobacterial-harmful-algal-blooms-cyanohabs-water>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/habs/index.html>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov/cyanohabs

Revised December 2023

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
IMPORTANT BOATER SAFETY NOTICE
FOR ALL LAKE SHIRLEY RESIDENTS

NEW MASSACHUSETTS BOATER SAFETY LAW

Effective April 1, 2026

Pursuant to the Hanson-Milone Safe Boating Act and M.G.L. c. 90B, §§ 9D and 9E, all operators of motorboats and personal watercraft (including jet skis) must obtain a valid Boater Safety Certificate.

WHO MUST COMPLY

- Born after January 1, 1989
Must obtain certificate by April 1, 2026
No penalties enforced until September 1, 2026
- Born on or before January 1, 1989
Must obtain certificate by April 1, 2028

IMPORTANT

All operators must carry proof of certification while the vessel is being operated on Massachusetts waters.

STATE-APPROVED COURSE

Massachusetts Environmental Police offers approved online and in-person courses.

Official state course information:

[Massachusetts Boat Safety Certificate Course](#)

Official law summary:

[Massachusetts Boating Law Summary](#)

This requirement applies to:

- motorboats
- pontoon boats
- fishing boats with motors
- jet skis / PWCs

Please help keep Lake Shirley safe for all residents and visitors.

Massachusetts Boating Law Summary

A summary of Massachusetts boating law including: Minimum age; safety education; required safety equipment and a listing of types of operation that are prohibited or considered unsafe.

Minimum Age Restrictions

No person under 12 years of age may operate a motorboat, unless accompanied on-board and directly supervised by a competent person 18 years of age or older. Personal watercraft (PWC) users must still be at least 16 years of age in order to operate, with no exceptions.

Safety Education Certification

Starting April 1, 2026, a valid boater safety certificate will be required for all individuals operating motorboats and PWCs in Massachusetts.

Who Needs a Certificate?

- Born after January 1, 1989:
 - Must obtain a certificate by April 1, 2026.,
 - No penalties will be enforced until September 1, 2026.
- Born on or before January 1, 1989:
 - Must obtain a certificate before April 1, 2028.

All operators of motorboats and PWCs will be required to carry proof of completion of an approved boater education course while on the water.

Requirements for Youth Operators

The following regulations are in effect until March 31, 2026:

- Ages 12 to 15
 - Must complete an approved basic boating course to operate a motorboat without adult supervision.
 - Upon successfully completing the course, students will receive a state-issued "boating safety certificate." This certificate must be kept in the possession of the certified operator when on the water.
- Ages 16 to 17
 - Individuals who wish to operate personal watercraft must also complete an approved boating course.
- Under 16
 - Youth under the age of 16 are not allowed to operate personal watercraft.
- Under 12
 - Youth under the age of 12 are not allowed to operate a motorboat unless supervised by an adult.

To view the new law in its entirety, please visit [Session Law - Acts of 2024 Chapter 350](#).

Accident Reporting:

The operator of any motorboat involved in an accident which results in personal injury, death, or property damage (over \$500) shall immediately notify the MA Environmental Police and file the appropriate accident report within the required time frame. (2 days-fatality; 5 days - all other accidents)

Safety Equipment

Most of the state equipment carriage requirements are similar to federal laws. This primary list includes personal flotation devices (PFDs) fire extinguishers, signaling devices, visual distress signals, and navigation lights.

- “Throwable personal flotation device”, a personal flotation device that is intended to be thrown to a person in the water, including personal flotation devices marked as Type IV or Type V with Type IV performance; provided, however, that unless specifically marked otherwise, a wearable personal flotation device shall not be considered a throwable personal flotation device.
- “Wearable personal flotation device”, a personal flotation device that is intended to be worn or otherwise attached to the body, including personal flotation devices marked as Type I, Type II, Type III or Type V with Type I, II or III performance.
- Every vessel not less than 16 feet shall have a throwable personal flotation device that is readily accessible and in good and serviceable condition.

In Massachusetts, PFDs are required to be worn by:

1. Youth under 12 years of age
2. Personal watercraft users
3. Water skiers
4. Canoeists/kayakers from September 15 - May 15

Boat owners or operators are responsible for ensuring that passengers on-board wear PFDs as required. Additionally, the state requires:

- All motorboats, except for personal watercraft, be equipped with an anchor, manual bailer, and line.
- A paddle or an oar is required on boats less than 16 feet in length.
- Motorboats towing skiers must be equipped with a boarding ladder.

Registration and numbering of all boats powered by machinery is required.

Prohibited Operation

The following types of operation are extremely unsafe and are prohibited:

- Operating any vessel under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Operators with blood alcohol concentration of .08 BAC are presumed to be impaired in Massachusetts. Penalties may include the loss of a motor vehicle driver's license, loss of vessel registration, significant fines and jail time.
- Operating a motorboat within 150 feet of a swimming area, whether public or private.
- Operating at an excessive speed considering weather conditions, boat traffic, and other hazards. For inland waters, operating at a speed greater than 45 mph is considered negligent operation.
- Operating a motorboat without properly working navigation lights.
- Operating a motorboat during the nighttime while towing waterskiers, tubers, etc.

- Operating at greater than headway speed (6 mph or less) within 150 feet of a swimmer, waterskier, mooring area, marina, boat launch, or when the operator's vision is obscured in any way.
- Operating in an overloaded condition (carrying total weight that exceeds capacity plate recommendations or is excessive considering water conditions)
- Operating with passengers on the bow, gunwales, or any other place where there may be a chance of falling overboard.

Personal Watercraft Operation

Personal watercraft (PWC) are considered motorboats by law and must comply with all boating laws and navigation rules, including the speed and operation provisions above. Additionally, PWC users must adhere to state regulations specific to personal watercraft operation:

- Wear an approved life jacket (PFD) at all times (operator and passengers).
- Attach the safety lanyard to the operator and the cutoff/kill switch.
- Always operate at slow, no-wake speed (6 mph or less) within 150 feet of a swimmer, the shoreline, a water-skier, a boat launch, a raft or float or a moored or docked boat

You must not operate a PWC:

- If less than 16 years old
- Under the influence of alcohol
- Between sunset and sunrise
- At high speed in congested areas
- On waters under 75 acres
- While towing persons on skis, tubes, etc.

Please note

This is only a summary of boating laws. All boaters must know and observe all local, state, and federal laws. For further information on boating laws, boating education, or to obtain accident report forms contact the Massachusetts Environmental Police at (508) 564-4961

LAKE SHIRLEY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION P.O BOX 567 SHIRLEY, MA 01464**June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026 OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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