

Best Practices for Putnam Lake

How to Live in a Lake-Friendly Way!

The quality of Putnam Lake and the surrounding parkland is directly affected by every homeowner. Fortunately, just a few simple steps on the part of each resident can dramatically improve our waters. Our lake is a beautiful resource and we encourage each community member to get involved directly or indirectly to help improve the water quality of Putnam Lake.

Below are just some of the things you can do to help Putnam Lake.

Stay Informed

Come to a Park District Meeting

You can always get the latest news on Putnam Lake and its continued improvement at Park District Meetings. Public meetings are held at 7:00 the first Thursday of every month at the New Life Church located at 29 Marshall Court in Putnam Lake. Residents can get information, offer suggestions or ask questions. Everyone is welcome.

Keep a Watchful Eye.

Report any vandalism, dumping or maintenance needs to the Park District Board by phone: 878-6500 Ext. 41, or via email at info@putnamlakeparkdistrict.com.

Yard Care

The network of roads in our tight community makes it easy for pollutants and nutrients to enter our lake. Pesticides, fertilizers, cleaning supplies, oil, compost, and septic can mix with rainwater and run into the lake through storm drains. Research has shown that just one pound of phosphorous can cause 500-1100 pounds of algae or lake weeds to grow! Although it may not be intentional, our actions play a major role in how green the lake becomes.

Avoid Fertilizers

The phosphorous and nitrogen you put down on your lawn or garden also feed the aquatic weeds in Putnam Lake. Most lawns don't need fertilizer to grow healthy and green. Leave your grass clippings on your lawn as a source of natural fertilizer and you can avoid using chemical fertilizers. It's cheaper and safer. If you must use fertilizer of any kind, use an organic or slow release kind to minimize the impact on the lake.

Avoid Pesticides. Residue from pesticides can run into the lake. It can poison birds, fish and insects, all of which are required for healthy lake water. Try a natural approach to gardening and skip the chemicals.

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Go to a Car Wash. Washing your car in the driveway or yard will carry oil and soap products into the soil or down the storm drain to the lake. This will add nutrients to the lake water.

Keep Your Yard Clean

Any old equipment, machinery, liquids, garbage or decaying debris lying around your property can leach contaminants into soil. Have them removed or put items out at bulk pickup in the fall.

Buffer Areas on Parklands and Lakeside Homes

All water flows down hill to the lake and carries with it the nutrients that feed vegetation. Placing a buffer zone of plants between open lawn areas and the water's edge helps decrease runoff and nutrients entering our lake. For homes with property abutting parkland or the water, please contact the Park Advisory Board to find out how you can get help planting buffer zones which will help the lake. Plus the geese won't hang out on your lawn!

Septic System Care

Failed septic systems or saturated fields can cause serious lake quality problems and beach closures. Problems don't just flush away, they flow into our lake. To maintain your septic system and keep problems from entering the lake, you should have your septic system pumped and inspected every 3-5 years.

In addition, contact a professional sooner if:

- Your toilets flush or drain slowly
- You often need plungers
- Wet areas remain around your septic fields or
- You smell unpleasant odors around your house

Wildlife

Don't feed the wildlife

Feeding the geese or ducks can have serious health consequences for our lake and residents. It not only encourages them to gather in large flocks, but can cause them to stop migrating and take permanent residence in our waters, thus increasing the population. Unlike swans, Geese and Ducks bring nutrients into the lake by eating on shore and pooping in or near the water. Each goose can produce up to a pound of feces a day, so a whole flock can dramatically increase the phosphorus and bacteria in the water and stimulate algae growth.

Keep the Goldfish at Home

The lake is a well balanced ecosystem of natural plants and animals. Please do not dump aquarium plants, fish or amphibians into the lake. They can wreak havoc with the lake's ecology.

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Parkland Care

Carry In, Carry Out.

Please come and enjoy the lake and parkland, but please take your belongings and garbage with you. Personal items such as chairs, tables or play toys get vandalized or weather beaten and end up in the lake. Your litter should go in a garbage can or be carried off with you.

Pick Up After Your Pet. Pet waste can contribute to fecal contamination when it gets washed into the lake with rainwater. Please bag and remove your pet's waste off the parkland.

Pick Up The Trash. As you stroll around the lake, consider picking up the garbage you see along the way. Loose trash doesn't stay put, it blows into the lake. Your small contribution will go a long way!

Keep Parklands Clean

Patterson Town code now makes it illegal to dump branches, leaves or brush on the parkland. Please dispose of properly. In addition, the decaying matter enters the lake as extra nutrients.

Leave the Parkland, Parkland.

Please remember, there is no altering the parkland in any way. Patterson Town Code makes it unlawful to clear, dig or remove trees, construct docks or stone walls or alter the parklands without prior permission. The parkland is for all of our park district residents. Let's keep it natural and healthy!

Boating

Check Boats, Trailers and Fishing Equipment for Hitchhikers.

Boats and equipment can carry aquatic weed fragments into Putnam Lake. It takes only one very wrong plant to create an invasive weed problem. To guarantee your equipment and boats are safe, use them only on Putnam Lake. If used elsewhere, wash thoroughly before enter Putnam Lake. Cleaning solutions should contain a minimum 2% bleach solution (3 ounces bleach to 1 gallon of water.) See www.PutnamLakeParkDistrict.com for more recommendations.

Thank you for getting involved. Your contributions, however large or small, make a significant impact on the Putnam Lake Water Quality.