

The Lake Champlain Committee (LCC)
is a non-profit citizens' group that has been working
to protect and improve Lake water quality since 1963.



Lake Champlain Committee
106 Main St. STE 200
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www.lakechamplaincommittee.org

"Julia and I love to go down to the
beach and splash in the waves. Then a
friend's dog died from eating algae.
Now I worry about whether it's safe
for her to play in the water."



**Help the Lake
Take the Pledge**

www.LakeChamplainPledge.org

The Lake Protection Pledge

We can create a cleaner lake. Currently Lake Champlain has too many algae blooms, too many closed beaches, and too many warnings about toxins in fish. Some of the pollutants that enter the Lake come from our own homes and driveways. Taking the simple actions below can prevent nutrients, sediment and toxins from getting into the water from your household. Pledge to help the Lake, then send the form below to the Lake Champlain Committee — the citizens' group that has been working to protect and improve lake health since 1963. It's free and easy and every Lake Champlain Basin resident who responds will get a free organic cotton, wonderfully designed lake T-shirt (please allow four to eight weeks for delivery).

I/We Pledge To:

Around the Home

- Never dump toxic materials down stormdrains, garage drains, or on the ground. *Waste dumped in stormdrains or on the ground is not treated before it enters waterways.*
- Keep stormdrains and ditches clear of debris. *Debris prevents proper drainage and causes flooding.*
- Avoid paving surfaces when building or re-modeling - use paving stones, bricks, sand or gravel instead. *Paved surfaces shed water too rapidly; alternative materials allow stormwater to sink into the soil.*
- Position gutters to drain onto grass, soil, or into a rain barrel. *This lets the water filter into the ground rather than flowing directly to streams.*
- Clean up pet waste at home or when walking my dog. *Dog and cat wastes contain high levels of bacteria harmful to people and the Lake. Deposit pet poop in toilets or garbage cans.*
- Use low-phosphorus or non-phosphate dishwasher detergents. *Check labels – excess phosphorus leads to algae blooms.*
- Have my septic tank inspected and pumped regularly. *Without regular checks and pumping, septic systems can fail, causing severe water quality problems and costly repairs.*
- Watch for signs of septic system failure. *Standing water, foul odors, patches of lush growth and backed up drains and toilets are problem indicators.*

Around the Yard

- Get a soil test and follow its recommendations for fertilizer use. *Most lawns don't need fertilizer, and whatever excess is applied ends up in the water, feeding algae growth.*
- Use compost and mulch to fertilize and hold water. *These products release their nutrients slowly, providing long-term feed for your lawn and garden.*
- Landscape with native groundcover and shrubs instead of lawn. *Plants naturally adapted to local conditions require less maintenance and fertilizer.*
- Choose drought-tolerant and pest-resistant plants. *This minimizes the need for pesticides and excess watering.*
- Tolerate some pest damage in my lawn or garden. *Non-toxic insecticidal soaps, dormant oil sprays, and "helpful insects" such as ladybugs can help keep pests at bay just as well.*
- Avoid using pesticides and herbicides on my property. *Pesticides and herbicides kill beneficial organisms as well as bothersome ones. When it rains, they wash into stormdrains and streams.*
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn. *Grass clippings and other organic matter provide natural slow-release fertilizer and improve the lawn's ability to hold water.*
- Maintain a vegetated buffer along the stream, river or lake if you live along a shoreline. *Buffer strips shade the stream, filter runoff, stabilize streambanks, prevent erosion, and provide habitat for animals.*
- Avoid over-watering. *Excess water runs off the lawn into the stormdrain system.*
- Re-seed thin areas in my lawn. *Planting bare soil prevents erosion and sedimentation of water bodies.*

Around the Garage and Town

- Wash my car on a lawn or at a commercial car wash. *This minimizes the dirt and detergents entering streams through the stormdrain system.*
- Maintain my car with regular tune-ups, and check for leaks. *Leaking fluids end up on parking lots and are washed into stormdrains and waterways during the next rain.*
- Dispose of oil and antifreeze properly. *Keep it out of stormdrains.*
- Reduce automobile trips. *Car emissions known as PAHs end up in Lake Champlain. PAHs are known to cause cancer.*
- Take a bus, ride my bike, walk or carpool whenever possible. *The average car emits about 900 pounds of pollution into the air each year and some of this ends up in the Lake.*

"I've been paddling and leading tours on Lake Champlain for years. Those summer days when I have to explain to clients why the water is a thick murky green are really depressing. I keep telling them we're working on it - things can get better. I hope I'm right."



www.LakeChamplainPledge.org

Pledge Here!

Copy the form, give it to friends and start a wave of Lake Champlain Pledges!

Yes, I/we agree to take the Lake Protection Pledge!

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Yes, you may use my/our name(s) in LCC's promotional materials about the Lake Pledge.

Yes, add me/us to your Citizen Activist List.

Adult T-shirt size (circle one): small medium large X-large

Yes, I'd/we'd like to do even more for the Lake by becoming a member of the Lake Champlain Committee.

Membership dollars are put back into the watershed to help protect and restore Lake health. Members receive monthly emails on lake issues and natural history, newsletters, action alerts, an annual *Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail Guidebook and Stewardship Manual* (for gifts of \$40 or more) and opportunities to get involved in lake advocacy and clean-up projects.

Enclosed is my/our gift of (circle one):

\$25 \$40 \$75 \$100 \$150 \$250 \$Other _____

Please direct my entire gift or \$_____ of my gift to LCC's phosphorus reduction campaign. (Your dollars will be matched two for one through a generous grant from the Argosy Foundation.)

Payment Method (circle one): Check VISA/MasterCard Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Please send me/us the 2003 *Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail Guidebook* (donations of \$40 or more).

I've/We've provided my/our email address above. Please email us *Lake Look*, LCC's monthly natural history column.

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"I remember when I was little we would wake up early and catch fish from Lake Champlain for breakfast. Now I won't let my kids eat the fish because of PCB's and mercury."



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