

What do people think impacts the water quality in a lake like Minnetonka?

(What really is impacting the water quality?-link to real-time data-Lake Minnetonka water quality/John J's land use maps and text)

Are people concerned about the quality of lakes in the West Metro?

What do people want to know about West Metro lakes?

Find out with these results and more from our *West Metro Lake Survey!*

Members of our Lake Access outreach team developed a survey for Hennepin County citizens to assure that our timely and accurate water quality information would also be understandable, relevant and accessible to you, the general public and decision-makers of the West Metro.

THANK YOU to the 161 individuals that responded to our questionnaire! You helped our Lake Access team develop the useful facts you need to make informed, day-to-day decisions about the water quality of your lakes.

West Metro Lake Survey

1. Approximately how many days per year do you use lakes in the West Metro area?

| | | |
|--------------|----|-----|
| None | 18 | 11% |
| 1-5 Days | 40 | 25% |
| 6-10 Days | 20 | 12% |
| 11-20 Days | 19 | 12% |
| Over 21 Days | 60 | 37% |
| No Response | 4 | 3% |

2. What is the ONE West Metro lake you currently use most?

| | | |
|--------------|----|-----|
| Minnetonka | 93 | 55% |
| Other lakes | 23 | 14% |
| Independence | 15 | 9% |
| Medicine | 11 | 6% |

3. In your opinion, which THREE items have the greatest impact on water quality in the lake you currently use most?

| | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| Lawn fertilizers and chemicals | 104 | 25% |
| Introduction of invasive exotic species | 98 | 24% |
| Fuel leakage from motorized watercraft | 36 | 9% |
| Urban, road or parking lot runoff | 28 | 7% |
| No Response | 28 | 7% |
| Damage to aquatic plants and lake bottom by watercraft | 22 | 5% |
| Agricultural fertilizers and chemicals | 19 | 5% |
| Failing septic systems | 17 | 4% |
| Aquatic plant removal | 18 | 4% |
| Shoreland plant removal | 11 | 3% |
| Municipal waste water discharges | 10 | 2% |
| Soil erosion from building or road construction | 10 | 2% |
| Livestock manure | 3 | 1% |
| Other | 4 | 1% |

4. Please check your impression below for the West Metro lake you currently use most.

Overall Beauty/Aesthetic Value

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent | 34 | 24% |
| Good | 82 | 58% |
| Fair | 22 | 15% |
| Poor | 0 | 0% |
| Don't Know | 1 | 1% |
| No Response | 2 | 1% |

Overall Health of Lake

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent | 3 | 2% |
| Good | 46 | 33% |
| Fair | 67 | 48% |
| Poor | 16 | 11% |
| Don't Know | 8 | 6% |
| No Response | 1 | 1% |

Quality of Fishing

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----|
| Excellent | 8 | 6% |
| Good | 50 | 35% |
| Fair | 26 | 18% |
| Poor | 16 | 11% |
| Don't Know | 39 | 28% |
| No Response | 2 | 1% |

5. Please mark your opinion below for the West Metro lake you currently use most.

Number of Lake Users

| | | |
|------------------|----|-----|
| Too Few | 2 | 1% |
| Just About Right | 29 | 21% |
| Too Many | 96 | 68% |
| Don't Know | 13 | 9% |
| No Response | 1 | 1% |

Number of Cabins/Homes

| | | |
|------------------|----|-----|
| Too Few | 2 | 1% |
| Just About Right | 51 | 36% |
| Too Many | 63 | 45% |
| Don't Know | 21 | 15% |
| No Response | 4 | 3% |

6. How concerned are you about the quality of lakes and shoreland areas in the West Metro area?

| | | |
|--------------------|----|-----|
| Very concerned | 67 | 42% |
| Somewhat concerned | 85 | 53% |
| Not concerned | 7 | 4% |
| No response | 2 | 1% |

7. Please estimate your level of general knowledge about the following subjects.

Lake water quality

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----|
| High | 18 | 11% |
| Medium | 93 | 58% |
| Low | 47 | 29% |
| No Response | 3 | 2% |

Proper care of shoreline property

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----|
| High | 29 | 18% |
| Medium | 74 | 46% |
| Low | 55 | 34% |
| No Response | 3 | 2% |

8. Are you interested in learning more about lakes in the West Metro area?

| | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| No | 52 | 32% |
| No Response | 8 | 5% |
| Yes | 101 | 63% |

9. Please check the item(s) you would like to learn more about West Metro lakes.

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| Actions that improve lake water quality | 68 | 11% |
| Control of aquatic plants | 57 | 10% |
| Change in water quality over time | 61 | 10% |
| Factors that influence lake water quality | 60 | 10% |
| Water conditions for swimming | 61 | 10% |
| Control of algae | 52 | 9% |
| Nutrient levels (nitrogen/phosphorus) | 40 | 7% |
| Non-native plant control efforts | 41 | 7% |
| Fisheries | 33 | 6% |
| Shoreland restoration with native plants | 27 | 5% |
| Basic understanding of how lakes work | 28 | 5% |
| User conflict resolutions | 22 | 4% |
| Real time lake measurements (oxygen profiles, mixing depths, lake temperature) | 22 | 4% |
| Effects of weather on lakes | 19 | 3% |
| Other | 6 | 1% |

10. Would you use the Internet to learn more about West Metro lakes?

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----|
| No | 73 | 45% |
| No Response | 5 | 3% |
| Yes | 83 | 52% |

11. Please check the item(s) below that would make it worth your time to visit our Web site.

| | | |
|---|----|-----|
| Information about the bacterial contamination of swimming beaches | 60 | 17% |
| Water clarity measurements | 58 | 17% |
| Current water temperature | 51 | 15% |
| Weekly fishing reports | 49 | 14% |
| Live camera coverage of lakeshore conditions | 37 | 11% |
| Regional weather | 36 | 10% |
| I do not have computer access | 28 | 8% |
| Current dissolved oxygen levels | 19 | 6% |
| Other | 7 | 2% |

12. Would you use an interactive kiosk to learn more about lakes in the West Metro area?

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----|
| No | 92 | 58% |
| No Response | 10 | 6% |
| Yes | 57 | 36% |

13. Please Check the THREE most convenient locations for you to use a kiosk.

| | | |
|----------------|----|-----|
| Library | 48 | 17% |
| Grocery Store | 45 | 16% |
| Beach | 40 | 14% |
| Boat Launch | 41 | 14% |
| Visitor Center | 37 | 13% |
| Mall | 35 | 12% |
| No Response | 18 | 6% |
| School | 11 | 4% |
| Museum | 5 | 2% |
| Other | 5 | 2% |

14. As new facts become available about West Metro lakes, which TWO ways would be most convenient for you to access in-depth news and information about your lakes?

| | | |
|-------------------|----|-----|
| Internet | 93 | 31% |
| No Response | 75 | 25% |
| Interactive kiosk | 50 | 17% |
| Other | 32 | 11% |
| Classes/Workshops | 24 | 8% |
| Organizations | 22 | 7% |

15. Please check TWO ways you would most likely notice a brief announcement about West Metro lakes.

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|-----|
| Minneapolis Star-Tribune | 80 | 24% |
| Direct mail | 67 | 20% |
| Network television | 37 | 11% |
| Other newspapers | 30 | 9% |
| Commercial radio | 25 | 7% |
| No Response | 24 | 7% |
| Public radio | 21 | 6% |
| Signs | 18 | 5% |
| Cable television | 18 | 5% |
| Newsletters | 14 | 4% |
| St. Paul Pioneer Press | 1 | 0% |
| Magazines | 1 | 0% |

16. Do you care for a lawn?

| | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| No | 24 | 15% |
| No Response | 3 | 2% |
| Yes | 133 | 83% |

A. Have you ever had your soil tested?

| | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| No | 121 | 85% |
| No Response | 3 | 2% |
| Yes | 18 | 13% |

B. How many times per year do you add fertilizer?

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----|
| 0 Times per year | 27 | 19% |
| 1-2 Times per year | 71 | 51% |
| 3-4 Times per year | 37 | 26% |
| Over 5 Times per year | 0 | 0% |
| No Response | 4 | 3% |

C. What do you do with your grass clippings and leaves?

| | | |
|--------------------|----|-----|
| Burn | 1 | 1% |
| Compost | 46 | 27% |
| Leave on Lawn | 92 | 54% |
| Place in trash bin | 10 | 6% |
| Put in gutter | 1 | 1% |
| Other | 18 | 11% |
| No Response | 2 | 1% |

17. Do you own/lease shoreland property?

| | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| No | 101 | 63% |
| No Response | 2 | 1% |
| Yes | 58 | 36% |

A. What is the name of the lake where you own shoreland property?

| | | |
|-----------------|----|-----|
| Long Lake | 2 | 3% |
| Lake Minnetonka | 37 | 61% |
| Other Lakes | 22 | 36% |

B. Which best describes your property at the edge of the water?

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| Rock/rip-rap added for stabilization | 32 | 42% |
| Natural landscape | 22 | 29% |
| Sand beach | 10 | 13% |
| Mowed lawn | 8 | 10% |
| Other | 3 | 4% |
| No Response | 1 | 1% |
| Concrete, steel or wood retaining wall | 0 | 0% |

C. If you have a private septic system, how frequently do you inspect and maintain it?

| | | |
|-----------------|----|-----|
| Once a year | 4 | 8% |
| Every 1-3 years | 4 | 8% |
| Over 3 years | 3 | 6% |
| Do not know | 4 | 8% |
| No Response | 35 | 70% |

18. What is your zip code?

| | | |
|-------|----|-----|
| 55311 | 8 | 5% |
| 55331 | 18 | 11% |
| 55345 | 9 | 6% |
| 55346 | 10 | 6% |
| 55356 | 8 | 5% |
| 55364 | 18 | 11% |
| 55391 | 28 | 17% |

19. What is your gender?

| | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| Female | 57 | 35% |
| Male | 103 | 64% |
| No Response | 1 | 1% |

20. What is your age group?

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----|
| Under 25 Years of age | 0 | 0% |
| 25-45 Years of age | 61 | 38% |
| 46-65 Years of age | 70 | 43% |
| Over 65 Years of age | 30 | 19% |

SURVEY DETAILS

The 20-question West Metro Lake Survey was designed with the assistance of other survey research centers, extension personnel, survey research reference books, and past Minnesota Sea Grant survey experiences. The first mailing consisted of sending 450 surveys, cover letters, brochures, and focus group post cards to a random list of Hennepin County residents from 23 select cities in November 1999. The list was generated by the Hennepin County Taxpayer Services. One month later, 400 additional surveys and new cover letters were sent to West Metro residents that did not respond to the first mailing. In January 2000, a third mailing was sent to 327 West Metro residents that did not respond to the first two mailing attempts. Overall, 161/450 completed surveys were returned with a 36% rate. In addition, 11 focus group cards were returned and 6 surveys with bad addresses.

WANT TO ADD YOUR TWO-CENTS? EMAIL US AT: eruzycski@nrri.umn.edu