

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