



## Cedar Lake – Frequently Asked Questions

Question – How do I change my address with the Lake District so I keep getting newsletters and other important mailings?

Answer: The Lake District does not maintain a list of lake residents or property owners. Our mailings are sent to the addresses showing on the Polk or St Croix county property tax records. We send the mailings to the same address to which your tax statements are sent.

Question – The lake level seems to be higher (or lower) than normal. Why is that?

Answer: Water levels are controlled by the dam at the southeast end of the lake. At the time the dam was installed, the DNR established lake levels that are to be maintained, depending on the time of year. We have the ability to add or remove boards from the dam to raise or lower the lake level, but only within the DNR established range limits. On, or very near, the first of November every year we start to remove boards to lower the level for the winter. This helps prevent shoreline damage from ice during the winter and early spring. Right after ice out in the spring, boards are added to raise the lake level to the normal summer level. During the summer months, boards are removed or replaced based on rainfall amounts in order to maintain a constant lake level. The time it takes to raise or lower the lake level can vary substantially, based on how much precipitation we receive during that time. Also, we must be aware that too much or too little water flow can have a detrimental effect on the downstream landowners and environment. Keep in mind a substantial rainfall can raise the water level and it may take time for the water to reach its normal level. Also keep in mind that ice movement in the winter and early spring can cause changes to the lake bottom near shore. This may be why your boat lift or dock isn't exactly in the same water depth every year.

Question - -How do I report unsafe or illegal practices I may see on the lake?

Answer: The Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District has no legal authority to enforce any town, county or state laws, ordinances or regulations. Anyone in the general public has right to contact the local Sheriffs (Polk and St Croix counties) to file excessive noise or dangerous boating or underage drinking (or other) complaints and request enforcement. They have the authority to enforce the various laws and ordinances. The Polk County Water Patrol Officer is J.T.Smith. His direct dial number is 715-485-

8329. In addition, the DNR has a violation hotline which can be reached by call or text at 1-800-847-9367. The DNR's Violation Hotline provides Wisconsin citizens with the opportunity to confidentially report suspected wildlife, recreational and environmental violations using a toll free number. These violations may include fishing or hunting out of season, night hunting, exceeding bag limits, illegal sale of fish and wildlife, deposit of harmful substances in lakes or rivers or illegal storage or disposal of hazardous waste.

Question - who do I contact if I suspect a zoning violation or improper land use?

Answer: The Lakeshore properties within the boundaries of the Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District are subject to the following laws and regulations and ordinances: 59.692 Wisconsin Statutes governs Zoning of Shorelands on Navigable Waters. Shorelands are defined as the area within 1000 feet from the ordinary high water mark. The DNR has jurisdiction of the area from the high water mark lakeward and has promulgated its Shoreland Regulations in NR 115 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Each County has jurisdiction from the high water mark landward and has published its own Shoreland Protection Zoning Ordinance. Polk County Chapter 33 and St. Croix County Chapter 17. Polk County Zoning can be reached at 715-485- 9279 and St. Croix County Zoning at 715-386-4680. Cedar Lake residents should contact the Zoning office with any questions before undertaking projects or if they see projects that may not meet regulatory codes. Recent laws passed by the Wisconsin Legislature did NOT strike down zoning requirements, but dictated that DNR regulations and local zoning ordinances cannot be more restrictive than the State Statutes. Therefore, some DNR regulations and County Ordinances have had to be amended, but our lakeshore continues to be subject to regulation. You can find more information here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/shorelandzoning/>

Question – What are the various buoys marking around the lake?

Answer: There are several sets of buoys around the lake. The line of buoys in the southwest corner of the lake and along the southeast corner of the lake mark “slow-no-wake” zones. This means that any boat operated within 100 feet of this zone (or within the bay) must be operated as slowly as possible while still maintaining steerage (control of boats direction). In addition, there are two individual buoys along the south end of the lake. These two buoys mark rock piles and must be avoided so your boat doesn’t get damaged. Please note that not all shallow depths, including the sandbar, are marked with buoys.

Question – What should I do if I find a suspected invasive plant or species in our lake?

Answer: If you find something suspicious, take a picture, bag it, and contact one of our [Board members](#) or Katelin Anderson, AIS Coordinator with Polk County at  
Katelin Anderson  
Polk County LWRD  
100 Polk County Plaza, Suite 120  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810  
(715) 485-8637  
[katelinanderson@co.polk.wi.us](mailto:katelinanderson@co.polk.wi.us)

Question – Are there resources available to tell me what’s best for the lake and what laws I am required to follow when maintaining my lake lot?

Answer: The brochure “[Contacts for Your Waterfront Property Questions](#)” provides a comprehensive list of contacts to help you.

Basic steps to follow to help the lake are to minimize runoff from your shoreland to the lake. This is usually accomplished with

- minimizing the amount of soil covered with impermeable materials
- diverting runoff to low areas where the water can soak in
- plantings to cover all exposed soil, especially the first 35 feet from shore

The University of Wisconsin Extension has many [helpful publications](#). The [staff at the Polk County Land and Water Resources](#) will also help with suggestions for practical shoreland practices to implement. Be forewarned, shoreland regulations can be difficult to understand and often time consuming to follow.