



Shrink Your Phosphorus “Footprint” Pledge

HOW TO...

Phosphorus, known as a limiting nutrient in lakes, is so minute that it is measured in parts per billion (ppb). Phosphorus is present in soils, both naturally, and as a result of human activity such as improperly functioning septic systems, fertilizers and construction activity. Small increases in phosphorus can have devastating effects on water quality leading to decreased clarity and frequent algal blooms. Rain and snowmelt result in stormwater runoff which carries pollutants, including phosphorus, from the land into the waterbodies.

In order to prevent excess amount of phosphorus from entering our lakes, we all need to pay attention to our actions. There are many things individuals can do that will make a difference for the overall water quality of your lakes. Provided in the AWWA Shrink Your Phosphorus “Footprint” Pledge” are ten actions that you can choose to pay attention to in order to limit your phosphorus impact on your lake.

Your lake association can do a lot to bring attention to the problem of increased phosphorus levels by starting a **Shrink Your P “Footprint”** campaign. This project is a simple way to educate and inform lake residents and property owners of the ways they can help limit phosphorus input and help protect their lakes.

1. Publish an article in your association newsletter about how phosphorus enters the lake and what effects elevated levels of P can have on algae growth and water clarity.
2. Offer an incentive for every P Footprint Pledge form signed and returned such as association merchandise, a free ice cream at a local vendor ... AWWA will be happy to work with you to plan and execute your campaign.
3. Follow up with pledge signers in a year to see if they changed any of their behaviors. Again, AWWA will be glad to help.



Shrink Your Phosphorus “Footprint” Pledge

I pledge to reduce the amount of phosphorus entering my lake by modifying at least one of the behaviors listed below:

- Say NO to fertilizers.** Many lawn fertilizers contain phosphorus that can wash into the lake after a rainstorm. Most lawns in this area don't need additional phosphorus to be healthy.
- Use phosphate-free laundry detergent.** Commercial detergents contain phosphates that enter your leech field and then enter surrounding water bodies after it rains.
- Change your cleaning habits.** Exchanging commercial cleaners for common household items such as; baking soda, lemon, borax, white vinegar, isopropyl alcohol, cornstarch, and/or a citrus solvent keeps excess phosphates out of your leech field.
- Scoop the poop.** Your pet's waste contains phosphorus that will easily enter the nearest waterbody after a rain storm.
- Check your septic tank.** Have your septic holding tank emptied every 1 to 2 years to avoid a backup or the leaking of phosphorus into groundwater.
- Have a soil erosion consultation.** Having a professional look at your property and recommend solutions could prevent a lot of phosphorus from entering the lake.
- Plant a buffer.** Planting or maintaining trees and shrubs along the water's edge helps prevent excess phosphorus in runoff from entering your waterbody.
- No soaps in the water.** Not bathing or washing your dog with soaps in your local water body prevents the phosphates in the soap from entering the waterbody.
- Control your roof runoff.** Directing the flow of roof runoff into a rain barrel, dripline trench, rain garden, or catch basin prevents excess polluted runoff from entering a waterbody.
- Boat responsibly!** Slow down near the shore to stop erosion and the release of phosphorus from the shore soils.

Signature

Name

(Print)

Lake

Date

Address

Email address

Phone #