



Shoreland Alteration Permits

Topographic Alterations (Grading and fill) *This does not include work for permitted structures*	Minor Alteration Permit - Up to ten (10) cubic yards of fill deposited, removed, or graded on steep slopes or within shore or bluff impact zones - Up to 100 cubic yards located between the shore impact zone and required setback - Topographic alterations located beyond the required setback - Projects overseen by SWCD, NRCS, DNR, or Watershed District - Emergency stabilization	Major Alteration Permit - All grading or filling not meeting minor permit limits. - Projects with increased environmental impact potential due to slope, amount of material, or other factors
Retaining Walls	- Permitted when a documented erosion problem exists - Walls not visible from the shore by virtue of topography or vegetation, are permitted - Replacement of nonconforming walls authorized under State Law, with a permit	***** Be sure to obtain a permit and share the details and conditions of the work authorized with your contractor. <u>You are responsible for ensuring the permit is followed and any violations resulting from not following the permit conditions.</u> *****
Rock Riprap	Rip-rap to control erosion when approved by Morrison County and an erosion issue is documented	
Impervious Surface/Patios	- May be placed between the lake setback and the shore impact zone - Must not have any feature above 12 inches from grade	
Sand Blankets	- On residential lots, the sand or gravel layer may be up to six (6) inches thick and may not be wider than 25% of the lot width at the water or fifty (50) feet wide whichever is less, and 10 feet landward from the ordinary high water level - Maintenance and/or replacement of existing sand blanket is limited and requires a permit	
Water Access Ramps	Only permitted on private residential lots on lakes without public access and if the site is not a federally designated wild or scenic river	
Ice Ridge	Permits are not required for any grading associated with removing or grading soil material due to ice action on a shoreline, provided that : A. The ice ridge resulted from ice action within the last year B. Not more than 200 feet of shoreline is affected	Shore Impact Zone: Area between OHWL and 50 feet from the water on a General Development lake (different on other lake classes).
Historic Ice Ridge	An ice ridge that has existed for over one (1) year requires a permit to modify <u>for lake access only</u> and must meet other standards	OHWL: Ordinary High Water Level

Lake Alexander Property Owners Association

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026



Hello LAPOA Members,

It's mid-April as I once again pen this first President's letter to begin the 2026 open water season – I hope all of you somehow all managed the winter and are looking forward to spring and summer! It has again been an interesting weather in recent weeks with highs and lows temperature-wise, and as of this Letter the ice went off on Friday, April 17, 3 days later than last year! But as all of you should be well aware, MN weather changes quickly so just give it an hour... As I like to do with this welcome back, let's keep our fingers crossed for a great beginning to the 2026 season on Lake Alexander!

The ice off season was a bit earlier than average but unfortunately there again are some areas of shoreline with heaving damage, so best of luck with taking care of that. I would argue that lake levels seem to be slightly lower than last fall but again not a major surprising considering a 3rd consecutive winter with little to no snow (as last year my drive plowed only twice). Our first LAPOA Board meeting was just held in mid-April, where the Board decided our Annual Meeting will be held in person at the Scandia Valley Town Hall on Saturday, August 8 at 9 am, followed by the Lake Alexander Lake Improvement District Annual General Meeting! Please get that date on your summer calendar and we'll hope to see many of you there....

Also, there have not been any new signs regarding Pine Bluff LLC (former Weyerhaeuser property) and so the Board has decided to "lay that to rest" but continue due diligence if needed. Concerning floating bogs, none have been brought to the Board's attention, however, floating bogs fall under the prevue of the LALID so contact them for assistance. Finally, continue to reach out to any of our Board members with enquiries or concerns and we'll do our best to respond in due time!

In closing, the Board and I hope to see you at our Annual Meeting at the Town Hall on the 2nd Saturday morning in August. In the meantime, get out and enjoy another open water season on Lake Alexander. Finally, I hope to see you many of you around the Lake and sincere thanks for your continued support of the LAPOA!

Peace,
Dr. Bill, President

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Mission Statement: To act as stewards of Lake Alexander in regards to water quality, fish management, and shore line conservation.			

Lake Alexander Property Owners Association Update

Website & Social Media Highlights by: Bob Andersen

Hello Lake Alexander neighbors,
We wanted to share a quick update on where you can find the latest information about our lake and how to stay connected.

 **LAPOA Website Updates:** The Lake Alexander Property Owners Association’s official website continues to be your best source for timely and reliable information. <http://lakealexander.mnlakesandrivers.org/>

- Meeting minutes from both Annual and Board of Directors meetings, past and recent.
- Updates on lake initiatives and planning efforts
- Helpful information focused on keeping Lake Alexander clean, safe, and enjoyable for everyone

If you haven’t visited in a while, it’s worth a look.

 **LAPOA Facebook Page:** Our official LAPOA Facebook presence is currently set up as a resource hub. You’ll find links to trusted organizations and programs that support lake stewardship, including:

- Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Lake Alexander page
- The Lake Steward Program

While it’s not a discussion page, it’s a convenient place to access important lake-related resources.

 **Helpful Lake Resources:** For those interested in learning more about lakes across Minnesota, the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates website is a great resource. Be sure to check out their 2025 Annual Report for insights on statewide lake health and initiatives. <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/>

You can also explore detailed, lake-specific information on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/lake.html?id=49007900> including:

- Fish stocking history
- Aquatic vegetation details
- Water quality and lake data

 **Community Facebook Page (Unofficial):** There is also a general Lake Alexander, Minnesota Facebook page open to anyone. This page is not affiliated with LAPOA, but it can be a useful place for:

- Local business recommendations
- Community questions and discussions
- General lake-related posts

As always, just keep in mind it’s an open forum

What does the State of Minnesota (MPCA) do with the water test results we send them

By: Jim McGonigle

We, as a board, as well as approximately 1,200 other MN volunteers, send in Secchi disc readings for water clarity to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) about every 3 weeks from early May through early September each year. In addition, our board sends water samples to RMB Labs at the same time to test for chlorophyll and phosphorus, both harmful to lakes and streams. The objective of MPCA’s water quality monitoring program is to determine a lake’s recreational suitability. You might call it “swimability”. Does a lake or stream meet water quality standards over time? Is there a trend? Algae, the huge influence, is caused by high temperatures, farm fertilizers and manure runoff, industrial wastewater, lawn fertilizers, etc. We are fortunate that we don’t have too much of this in our area.

What does the MPCA do with the data we send them?? Data is entered into MPCA’s Equis system every year for each lake that has water quality monitors. They must have a minimum of 8 continuous years with a minimum of 50 data points total in order to properly identify a trend. And, the MPCA only tests for trends in a lake with sufficient data every 10 years. You can now see that the old data from 20 or 30 years ago is just as important as the new data we are collecting. Lake Alexander was last tested by MPCA in 2020.

You might say the MPCA is taking the blood pressure of a water body. They can estimate algae and lake clarity, and to a degree, the MPCA can identify a lake’s response to seasonal changes in temperature, response to surrounding land use levels, response to construction and/or development, or even response to severe weather.

I think Lake Alexander’s blood pressure is just fine. My friends and neighbors think so, too. Let’s all take a dip this summer!

Lake Steward Program – Sign Up Now!

By: Doug Cook

The *Lake Alexander Property Owners Association* (LAPOA) teamed up with *Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates* last year to launch the Lake Steward Program! This program celebrates property owners who are making smart choices to protect our lake by using sustainable shoreline practices.

Last year, a trained Lake Association volunteer started evaluating properties. Ten Lake Stewards were certified and given signs to show they’re committed to protecting the lake.

By joining, you can get a Lake Steward sign and help make Lake Alexander cleaner and healthier for everyone, now and in the future.

Why Become a Lake Steward?

Minnesota’s lakes are facing challenges, with 56% of the surface waters showing signs of impairment, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. While different agencies are working on water management, it’s often a bit scattered, so getting local people involved is super important. At Lake Alexander, 56% of the shoreline has been developed (DNR), and 44% is in a natural or restored state. The DNR says that 75% of a lake’s shoreline needs to be natural for the lake to stay healthy for fun activities and to keep it a beautiful place without algae blooms, pesticide/herbicide runoff, or a shrinking fish population. We’ll need lots of property owners to restore their shorelines to reach that 75% natural goal, but it’s a great goal for keeping property values up, too!

Minnesota is home to 500 Lake Associations, and around 100,000 members are working hard to improve water quality. By joining the LAPOA Lake Steward Program, you’re becoming part of a team dedicated to safeguarding our lakes and shaping water management across the state.

To get started, simply take the 10-question online **Lake Steward Quiz** and search for “*Minnesota Lakes and Rivers/Programs/Lake Steward*” on the web. You can also find a link on the **Lake Alexander Property Owners Association** Facebook page, which also directs you to our website. And don’t forget, there’s a QR code on the program graphic page in this newsletter. Taking the quiz is the first step in becoming a part of the program!

Shoreline Management Rules

By: Doug Cook

Minnesota’s shoreland management rules establish minimum zoning standards to protect habitat and surface water quality and preserve property values These standards are administered by the county through adopting a shoreland ordinance. The first shoreland ordinance was adopting by Morrison County in 1972 and it has been amended over the years. **All property located within 1,000 feet of any protected lake would have to follow the shoreline ordinance.**

The lakes, streams, rivers and the protected wetlands of the County are governed by the [Morrison County Land Use Control Ordinance](#). The [classification](#) of lakes as well as structure setbacks, bluffs, vegetation and topographic alterations are addressed in this ordinance. Permits are required for all construction, grading and filling, and other shoreline projects. Morrison County has developed a [shoreland guidance document](#) to help understand the rules and regulations of property within this zone. You can find this document on the Morrison County Government website under [government/land services/ shoreland](#). Alternatively, you can find the shoreline guidance document links on the LAPOA website or the LAPOA Facebook page.

NEW Shoreland Contractor Licensing Requirement

Effective May 1, 2026, Morrison County requires anyone in the business of excavating or landscaping within the shoreland zoning district to be licensed by the county. To obtain the license the individual must attend training provided by Morrison County Land Services, apply for a license with the associated fee, and provide a 25,000-dollar performance bond in favor of Morrison County. Permitted work includes basement or structure excavation, hauling fill, and installing riprap, patios, sand blankets, retaining walls, new driveways, etc. Permits issued by the county must identify a licensed contractor before issuance unless the property owner is conducting the work themselves.

Be sure to obtain a permit and share the details and conditions of the work authorized with your contractor. You are responsible for ensuring the permit is followed and any violations resulting from not following the permit conditions.