SILVER LAKE ASSOCIATION
Newsletter

January-March 2018   Shorewood/Chanhassen, MN

This Winter –
Be Salt Smart to Reduce Pollution

Salt and other de-icer products used on sidewalks and driveways are a significant source of water pollution. When snow and ice melts, the salt goes with it, washing into our lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater. Once in the water, there is no way to remove the chloride which can harm fish and plant life.

Rock salt (NaCl or sodium chloride) is the most common de-icer because it is inexpensive. But, it does not melt effectively at low temperatures. Other de-icers with magnesium and calcium chloride work better in colder temperatures. But there are no "friendly" products. They all impact the environment.

The experts recommend these 4 tips for reducing deicer usage:

Shovel
Shovel first! Clear walkways and other areas before the snow turns to ice. The more snow you can remove manually, the less salt you will need to use.

Scatter If you need to apply salt to pavement, scatter the salt widely, leaving space between grains of salt. A hand or push spreader helps too.

Switch
Common de-icers don't melt snow and ice well when it gets very cold, so they should not be applied. Instead, use a small amount of sand for traction.

Sweep   Salt only works once it is dissolved. If you can see salt on your driveway, it isn't doing any work. Sweep it up, and use it again next time.

Sources: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, RPBCWD

About SLA

The Silver Lake Association includes residents living on or near the lake whose goal is to enhance the recreational, aesthetic and ecological values of the lake. You received this newsletter because you live in the Silver Lake Sub-watershed and have an impact on the lake's health, and ultimately, on all downstream water bodies.

A volunteer Steering Committee meets regularly and is responsible for coordinating communication and other activities between the Association and local government and community agencies. The names and contact information for current Committee members are listed on the website.

An event that galvanized the formation of the Association was a decision by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in 2016 to reclassify Silver Lake as **wetland** instead of a **shallow lake**. SLA membership strongly disagreed, and led by the efforts of Brock Austin and Marc Riedel, convinced the MPCA to retain the shallow lake designation.

WEBSITE   **www.SilverLakeMN.org**

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2% Institutional   72% Residential   4% Open Space

22% Open Water

LAND USE in the Silver Lake Watershed

Aquatic Plant Survey Confirms Wild Rice Growing In Lake

A recently completed survey of aquatic plants in Silver Lake confirms what some residents already knew: there's wild rice growing in the lake! This is extremely rare for an urban lake. Wild rice, which is the state's official grain, was spotted in 7 locations along the southeast shoreline. The survey, completed in August, also measured the presence of many other aquatic plants. Not surprisingly, cattails were observed along the shoreline of the entire lake. Also spotted in several locations around the lake was purple loosestrife, a non-native invasive species.

WATERLILY + DUCKWEED

The most abundant submerged plant was coontail, observed in 93% of 113 sampling locations. It grows underwater with no roots, but its upper spiny leaves may reach the surface and look like watermilfoil. Canadian waterweed and multiple varieties of pondweed were found in 60% of the lake. Among floating plants, the most prolific were white waterlily and duckweed. They were both found in 51% of the test sites.

The vegetation in Silver Lake reflects its status as a shallow lake. The survey measured water depth at less than 6 feet in about 75% of the lake. With shallow water and an excessive amount of nutrients, plant density above and below the surface can reach nuisance levels during the summer.

Source: "2017 Aquatic Plant Survey: Silver Lake", August 2017, Freshwater Scientific Services, LLC / RPBCWD

Plants: Remedial Actions Are Limited

Under Minnesota law, aquatic plants growing in public waters are the property of the state. Because of their value to the lake ecosystem, they may not be destroyed unless authorized by the DNR.

When a permit is NOT needed:

Submerged Vegetation: A lakeshore property owner may create/maintain a swimming or boating dock area no larger than 2500 sq. ft. by cutting or pulling submerged vegetation like coontail.

Floating Vegetation: A lakeshore property owner may create/maintain a channel no wider than 15 feet extending to open water by removing floating vegetation, like water lilies or duckweed.

When a permit IS needed:

Emergent Vegetation: The destruction of any emergent vegetation, **like cattails**, is prohibited without a DNR permit. Emergent plants are rooted in the lake bottom, but their leaves and stems extend out of the water. The DNR permits the removal of these plants only in a small area to provide boat access to deeper lake water.

Floating Bog: A permit is required for moving or removing a bog of any size that is free-floating.

Herbicides or Algaecides: Any application requires a permit.

Source: MN Department of Natural Resources

Fall sunrise on Silver Lake

The Spring issue of this newsletter will discuss preventative measures to reduce phosphorus in runoff and thereby curtail plant over-population.

Silver Lake Neighbor Appointed to Watershed Board

Ridge Road resident, Dorothy Pedersen, has been appointed to the Board of Managers for the Riley-Purgatory Creek-Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD). The Silver Lake Sub-Watershed is contained within the RPBCWD.

The five member Board is responsible for managing the activities of the district which is about 50 square miles in surface area and includes portions of six cities.

Prior to her appointment, Dorothy was Chair of the Citizens Advisor Committee which is a volunteer advisory group that provides input to the Board.

Dorothy's volunteer activities are in addition to being the founder and manager of Nature's Garden LLC, a successful landscape design/build firm.

Dorothy's enthusiasm and expertise will be significant assets to the RPBCWD in pursuing its mission to restore and protect our waters.