

PWA's LakeSmart Program

A homeowner will request a LakeSmart evaluation from Pemaquid Watershed Association (PWA). The program is designed to educate, reward and recognize watershed property owners who adopt and maintain responsible property management. Studies have shown that as water quality declines the value of shorefront property also decreases. Declining water quality also can affect the type and number of fish species and other wildlife that inhabit the lake and can hinder other recreational uses of the lake as well as the local economy.

Participating landowners receive a free evaluation of their property from certified volunteer evaluators with a site visit. During this visit the evaluator will ask questions about your property. If for some reason you can not be present during the evaluation, you can fill out the short pre-evaluation questionnaire and return it to PWA's LakeSmart Coordinator or the PWA office at 15 Courtyard Street, Damariscotta, phone: 563-2196.

Next, the evaluator walks around the property and reviews landscape and management practices in the five following categories:

- Road, Driveway, and Parking Areas
- Structures and Septic System
- Lawn, Recreation Areas, and Footpaths
- Shorefront and Beach
- Undeveloped Land

Points based on established criteria are given in each category. If the property owner scores high in the first four categories, he or she receives an award certificate and sign for their LakeSmart property. Award winners are published (with the permission of the owner) in newspapers, newsletters and on the Maine Lakes Society web page.

Lesser scores receive a Certificate of Commendation and helpful suggestions. Many LakeSmart fixes involve simple, non-technical improvements such as covering bare dirt with mulch, increased use of native plants, managing paths to prevent erosion, or minimizing the use of harmful chemicals. LakeSmart can be cost saving if a site visit identifies a problem that could become expensive if not addressed. The recommendations for improvements will help a property qualify for the LakeSmart Award and further protect water quality. If a property does not initially meet the standards, the landowner has the option to make modifications and be re-evaluated.

LakeSmart is a program of the **Maine Lakes Society**. www.mainelakessociety.org
A partner with **Pemaquid Watershed Association**. www.pemaquidwatershed.org



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