

A **riparian** is a person who owns a parcel of land which borders a natural body of water within the boundaries of the State of Michigan.

Riparian Responsibilities

Riparians have a special responsibility to prevent pollutants from entering the lake or stream. Some common pollutants include: lawn fertilizers, runoff from driveways, roofs and walkways, lawn clippings and leaves, soil from the shoreline or streambank, lawn & garden pesticides, oil & gas from autos (and boats), and septic system effluent.



What you can do to prevent pollution from entering the waters:

If you have a septic system -

- have your tank pumped out & inspected at least every 3-5 years
- consider installing an effluent filter (talk with your septic service technician)
- spread out laundry loads – doing many consecutive loads can overload system
- practice water conservation – a good rule for everyone whether their home is served by a septic system or sanitary sewer
- fix leaks – one drop per second from a leaking faucet can add up to 113 gallons of water wasted each month!
- dispose of hazardous household chemicals properly- not down the drain
- keep accurate records of maintenance and location of septic system
- divert roof & footing drains and surface water away from the septic system
- do not use commercial septic tank additives
- keep antibiotics and antibacterial soaps out of system- your septic tank is a place where you actually want bacteria to live!
- do not use a garbage disposal – grinded food from a garbage disposal decomposes more slowly than liquid waste and adds to the solids in the tank
- read this important PDF brochure on [Septic Systems](#)

Practice healthy lawn and garden practices -

- Maintain a minimum 25-foot buffer area adjacent to water body where no fertilizer is applied (per Township Fertilizer Regulations). Consider planting native wildflowers, grasses and/or shrubs in this area which trap soil and other pollutants.
- Soil test your lawn prior to adding fertilizer to see what your lawn actually needs. Soil tests are available at local retailers and through the Oakland County MSU Extension at 248.858.0902.
- When using fertilizer, choose a slow-release nitrogen and low-or no phosphorus formula (depending on the results of the soil test). A list of appropriate fertilizers can be found at [Healthy Landscapes.com](#).
- Mow grass high- a 2/12-3 inch blade is optimum for water conservation and promoting root growth.

- Avoid weed-n-feed products- combination products often add unnecessary herbicides to the environment. A better approach is to identify the weed of concern and selectively spot treat the weed(s) with appropriate herbicide.
- Dispose of yard waste properly per Township requirements or try home composting - NEVER DUMP YARD WASTE IN WATERCOURSES!