



Question:

I'm concerned about Lake Pocotopaug and its current condition, given the warning issued by the town recently. I've been hearing that the lake has been in this condition for 40+ years and that it's normal. Is that true? Has the lake been maintained over the years? If the lake is deteriorating, what are we doing to address these issues and how can we can get involved to express concerns and to take action?

Answer:

Blue/green algae blooms are not something new and have been occurring in many places around the United States for a long time. What is new is the degree that they are occurring and the research surrounding blue/green algae. Within the last 5-10 years it has been proven some types of blue/green algae can produce toxins that can be harmful to people and pets. As a result, the State of Connecticut has developed a guideline for Health Districts to follow in relation to bathing water testing and allowable amounts of blue/green algae.

There are multiple factors that are leading to the algae blooms that occur in Lake Pocotopaug. To date, there is not one magic reason and as a result the Town and civic organizations are faced with a daunting task of trying to fix all of them. Over the last few years well over a million dollars has been spent on the Lake watershed and watershed infrastructure improvements. It has taken a long time for the lake to get to the condition that it is now and it will take us all some time and a lot of work to get it back to a state of where it was. The Town has a Conservation Lake Commission that is leading the charge on making our lake healthier. Their meetings are a perfect forum to express concerns over the lake. Furthermore people wanting to take action can help by cleaning up their yards in the lake watershed, implementing green infrastructure (like rain gardens to manage storm runoff) and support storm water management and road funding requests during budget time.