



Choosing green products

Using phosphate-free or environmentally-friendly items is always a good choice when buying products for your home.

Other smart habits you can adopt

- **Take household hazardous waste such as left over paint, oil or chemicals to your local community recycling centre for proper disposal.** Did you know that one drop of oil can pollute 25 litre of water?
- **Never pour anything down your drain or toilet.** Household items such as grease, rags, sticks, diapers, paper towels and sanitary products can be harmful to our wastewater systems.
- **Don't litter.** Unwanted garbage washes into Lake Ontario affecting the shoreline and hurting birds, fish and other animals.
- **Be sure to bring a bag to clean up any messes when walking your pet.** Feces that is not picked up can contaminate our water sources as well.

By thinking twice about how you use the water at home you can easily stop chemicals and other harmful products from reaching the Lake.

Keep a Healthy Lake Ontario

Lake Ontario is an important part of every life in the Region of Peel. It is the source of drinking water for Brampton and Mississauga and some parts of Caledon.

It is important to understand how our choices and behaviours impact the overall health of the Lake.

Taking care of the Lake is a smart way to protect the quality of our drinking water and maintain the beauty of our lakeshore.

For more information, please call the Region of Peel at 905-791-7800 or visit our website at www.peelregion.ca and search *A Healthy Lake Ontario*

Do you know where your water goes?



How you use water has an impact on our water source

Lake Ontario receives water from many sources including the creeks, streams and rivers in our neighbourhoods. The first step is to understand how our activities impact it, and that the water we use every day is returned to Lake Ontario.

Water inside your home

When you use water inside your home—to wash dishes, brush your teeth, shower or flush the toilet—the used water becomes wastewater, which travels to a wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater is then treated, however, not all traces of the products we use can be removed during the treatment process before the water discharged to Lake Ontario.

Being aware of what we put down the drain means the treated wastewater entering the Lake will be as clean as possible.

Water outside your home

When you use water outside your home—to wash your car or water your lawn after fertilizing it—the used water travels directly to Lake Ontario without being treated through storm water pipes.

What this means is there is no process in place for removing these chemicals or nutrients from the used water.

The effect of these chemicals and nutrients on our water

When chemicals and nutrients are added to our water source, the delicate balance between the organisms, plant life and fish can be changed.

One example of this is the green algae called Cladophora that grows in Lake Ontario during the summer. The algae lives on nutrients such as phosphorous that make their way into the Lake. Phosphorous can be found in many of the products we use at home, such as soaps and fertilizers. Towards the end of the summer when algae decays, they cause unpleasant odours and unattractive shorelines.

How you can help keep Lake Ontario healthy

Knowing how to make smart choices is the easiest way to ensure the health of our water and the environment.

Washing your car

If you like to have a clean car, take it to a local car wash instead of washing it at home. A car wash collects the used water where it goes to the wastewater treatment facility before entering Lake Ontario.



Fertilizing your lawn

When you fertilize your lawn ensure you read the instructions carefully and don't over apply. Keeping fertilizer off pathways and driveways is a good way to reduce unnecessary runoff that goes untreated into the Lake.

