



The Role of Lake Wise Evaluators and Leaders

The Lake Wise Program

The Lake Wise Program, field started in 2013, is an ANR program that awards lake-friendly shoreland property, including that of state parks, town beaches, private homes and businesses.

The goal of Lake Wise is to establish a new normal, a new culture of lakeshore landscaping. A property that earns the Lake Wise Award will represent a “model” shoreland property. The Lake Wise Award certifies a property is well managed, using shoreland Best Management Practices, and is protecting the lake.

The Lake Wise Program is based on social science research that shows people are most influenced by their neighbors - *monkey see, monkey do*. It is also developed after Maine’s successful social marketing program, Lake Smart, which aims to inspire action through positive recognition. The desire of landowners to earn the Lake Wise Award will, in effect, improve lakeshore practices and protect wildlife habitat and lake quality.

Lake Wise Evaluators

- Lake Wise Evaluators have a background in natural resources management, including managing stormwater runoff and protecting wildlife habitat.
- All Evaluators use the same methods and impartiality for each assessment.
- Evaluators spend one and half hours maximum assessing and providing technical advice on each property. Properties are evaluated according to the Lake Wise criteria for *shore*; *recreation area*; *driveway*; and *structure* and *septic*. If all the appropriate Best Management Practices are in place, then the property earns the Lake Wise Award, otherwise, the Evaluator gives the landowner a copy of recommendations for how to become Lake Wise certified in the future. Landowners have up to three years to make the improvements and to be assessed a second time for earning the Lake Wise Award, after which time, a whole new evaluation would need to be done.

Lake Wise Leaders

Lake Wise Leaders serve as the local, volunteer Lake Wise contact. The Leader’s job is to encourage shoreland owners to follow the Lake Wise BMPs and ultimately earn the Lake Wise Award. Lake Wise Leaders conduct preliminary assessments of anyone’s shoreland property to advise them on what needs to be done, if anything, before the official Lake Wise Evaluator is called out to assess the property.

Lake Property Owners, Lake Associations, and Lake Users

If you are interested in bringing the Lake Wise Program to your favorite lake, and/or would like to participate as a Lake Wise Leader, then please contact:

Amy Picotte, at Amy.Picotte@vermont.gov or tel. 802-490-6128

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