

Lake Treatment

Lake Terramuggus is one of the cleanest lakes in the State, and the Town of Marlborough has a stringent and effective water testing policy and protocol in place to ensure that it remains clean. Over the past five to ten years, there has been a noticeable increase in some common lake algae's, invasive plants and weeds. The Town and our residents have been – and continue to be - very good stewards of our lake.

The Town's Lake Advisory Commission, in conjunction with our environmental engineer, have spent the last five years discussing and looking for effective treatment to control the fastest growing weed problem, pondweed. As they searched for answers, they contacted several Lake Associations in CT and MA to determine how others were managing the problem, and it was determined that Diquat was the most effective treatment for the problem. The Commission then sought funding for two years, until it was finally included in last year's budget. An RFP was put out, several companies were interviewed and one, Solitude, was eventually selected.

A permit was applied for from DEEP, and it was issued with no precautions or notification protocols required. The contracted company notified us on Friday that we were on their schedule for this week, but specifics were not given. A total of 15 gallons was used to treat our 85 acre lake, so it is quite diluted. Diquat can be purchased through any number of retailers or online for use by homeowners for their ponds or lakes. Please note: the swim area and private beach association swim areas were NOT treated.

I was first made aware of the yellow signs that were posted early Thursday morning by an observant resident, and that was the first I knew that any signs had been posted listing any kind of precaution. About an hour or two later, I received a call from Channel 3's reporter. I answered the reporter's questions, but told her truthfully that I did not have any concerns about the treatment; at this moment I still have no concerns. The Town did not notify residents because we were assured that this is not harmful in any way to people, pets or even fish. If it was – we would not have allowed it to be used.

Our plan is to monitor the pondweed growth to see if this is an effective way to control this aggressive weed, and to continue our environmental water quality testing. If we decide that it is an effective treatment that should be used again, I would certainly require that residents be notified in advance; not out of any concern, but to let each family decide for themselves if they want their children to swim or not. We realize that many people are more environmentally sensitive than others, and we make every effort to notify residents about activities like roadside spraying, field fertilization or treatments, or any burning at the transfer station. We didn't notify in this case, because we were not notified that any precautions were necessary, and continue to assert that they were not necessary.

I am sorry for any concerns or worry that this news story - or our failure to notify - has caused. Much study went into this treatment, and the intent was to maintain the quality of our lake. If we ever treat again, we will be sure to post a notification.

Amy J. Traversa
First Selectman