



## PROTECT LAC PEMICHANGAN

### CODE OF CONDUCT AND BEST PRACTICES

Consider your impact and act conscientiously so the lake can be enjoyed for years to come!

**DON'T POLLUTE.** Keep the lake, its shoreline, and our communities litter-free; store garbage and plastics until they can be disposed of appropriately. Refuel carefully to avoid spillage; check and clean your bilge; use eco-friendly cleaners; keep cleaning run-off out of the lake; avoid 2-stroke engines when possible. Don't add anything to the water you wouldn't want to drink.

**CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY YOUR BOAT and STEER CLEAR.** Combat invasive species, including milfoil and zebra mussels, by thorough boat, personal water-craft (Sea-doo/Jet Ski) and trailer washing (wake craft/ballast tanks, which are not well-suited to the lake, require extra vigilant cleaning and longer dry out time); avoid activity in milfoil weed beds (note that milfoil can root in water up to 10m deep). If you must boat between the shoreline and a milfoil bed, glide in with your propeller off.

**MINIMIZE WAVES/WAKES** which damage the shoreline, loon nests, fragile ecosystems and docks, and contribute to accidents. Travel at speeds which create the least amount of wave activity, especially in narrow and shallow zones, and transition to "planing" as quickly and safely as possible. Avoid deliberately generating waves and keep activities that require higher speeds to deep, open water. Wake boats and wake PWCs are not well-suited to the dimensions of the lake as they require a 300 m distance from shore (600 m total width) and deep water to minimize their impact on the shoreline and lakebed.

**BE SAFE.** Engage in activities consistent with your skill level and water/weather conditions, with caution and courtesy for others. Know and follow all boating and swimming safety laws and practices including: carry a Pleasure Craft Operators Card and required safety equipment; wear a lifejacket; always have a spotter when towing tubers and water-skiers; don't follow other watercraft too closely. Limit speed near swimmers and other craft and whenever visibility is poor. Swimmers and non-motorized craft have right-of-way. Swim with a buddy and make yourself visible. Use lights. **Boat and swim sober!**

**THINK BEFORE ANCHORING IN SENSITIVE AREAS.** Avoid environmentally fragile areas and do not anchor too close to the shore, a dock, island, private land or buoy. Respect the space of others on the water and leave ample room for passing. At night use positioning lights.

**LEAVE A NATURAL SHORELINE** which protects the entire lake and its aquatic life. Leave the 15-meter shoreline zone untouched and refrain from using pesticides and fertilizers anywhere; construct docks with non-polluting materials such as natural untreated wood, and allow lake water to flow freely. Do not disturb the lake bottom.

**"LEAVE NO TRACE"** when picnicking and camping. Use designated sites only. Take out everything you bring in (including litter and leftovers). Do not alter a site by building structures/furniture or digging trenches and never cut a tree for any reason. Minimize campfires, use designated fire sites, and ensure your fire is fully extinguished before you leave. Don't wash yourself using soap or your dishes in the lake. Dispose of fish remains in deep water only. Use the outdoor box toilets with consideration for others, including the volunteers who maintain the sites; if none is available, dig a hole far from the water and recover with soil after use.

**USE PHOSPHATE-FREE BIODEGRADABLE PRODUCTS** for personal hygiene and cleaning and never wash with soap in the lake. All soap, whether biodegradable or not, detrimentally affects lake chemistry and can negatively impact fish and other aquatic organisms. Choose non-nano inorganic chemical compound sunscreens or UV protective clothing. Make sure your septic system meets current building code requirements and is well-maintained.

**BE FIRE SAFE.** Obey municipal and provincial fire bans (see SOPFEU); keep a water source nearby, never leave a fire unattended and avoid having fires in the sensitive 15 metre shoreline strip (ashes can negatively affect the natural balance of aquatic plants). Store flammable substances safely; be vigilant about wood stove, fireplace and chimney construction and maintenance.

Lac Pemichangan is an area of exceptional beauty, enjoyed by a diverse community united by its interest in preserving the lake's pristine water and serenity for current and future generations. With shared respect for the environment, each other, and the range of activities the lake supports, we can minimize our impact by following these generally accepted best practices.

Become a member! Join @ [pemichangan.org](https://pemichangan.org).

**MINIMIZE NOISE.** Noise negatively impacts wildlife and disturbs others. Ensure boats have required mufflers and don't produce excessive noise. Avoid circling repeatedly in one area and never close to shore. Remember that sound carries farther on the water: keep voices quiet and amplified music to a minimum. Have consideration when using power tools, carrying out construction, and driving ATVs. Fireworks disturb the sensitive hearing of wildlife.

**MINIMIZE OUTDOOR LIGHT.** Using a minimum of outdoor lighting in warm tones only when needed, shaded and directed downward, is best for the health of nocturnal animals and allows everyone to enjoy a starry sky. If safety is a concern, consider motion sensor lights and timers; reflective tape and markers are non-intrusive alternatives to dock and pathway lighting.

**RESPECT WILDLIFE'S BOUNDARIES.** Stay away from potential loon nesting areas; enjoy loons from a distance, with binoculars regardless of whether you are in a motorized or non-motorized craft. Do not feed or domesticate waterfowl or wild animals; seal garbage securely in animal-proof containers. Fireworks are especially disturbing to wildlife and contain persistent toxins - please consider other ways of celebrating. For their safety, do not let pets roam unsupervised.

**CARE FOR OUR REGION.** The lake is an integral part of the Vallée-de-la-Gatineau; caring for the entire watershed and our communities within it promotes a healthy region and a healthy lake.