



## Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group

[www.millelacswatershed.org](http://www.millelacswatershed.org)

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### TOPIC OF THE MONTH - MARCH 2017

What is a BMP? We hear the term all the time but what does it really mean? BMP stands for Best Management Practices and is a term used to indicate, “These are good things you should do”. Shoreland BMPs are the good things you should do on your lakeshore property to protect the health of your lake.

Many BMPs are easy things that you can do yourself. For example, pick up dog waste often, don’t mow lawns all the way down to the lake shore and leave a strip of unmowed vegetation at the shoreline. Redirect roof runoff to rain barrels or vegetated areas planted with pollinator gardens and trees and shrubs. Learn to use non-chemical techniques in lawns and gardens. Plant shrubs into shoreline rocks to create fish habitat. Be sure grass clippings and soapy water do not run into the lake. Reduce the hard surfaces on your property. These Best Management Practices protect the lake and enhance the beauty of your yard at the same time.

Most shoreline BMPs include native grasses, trees and shrubs that capture rainfall, slow it down and allow it to soak into the ground. Their long roots hold soil in place and prevent erosion of the shoreline. Hard surfaces and mowed lawn grass allow rain water to quickly run across their surface. This rain water picks up pollutants, erodes shorelines and can cause flash flooding.

To further protect your lake, be sure to seal unused wells that act as a path for pollutants to reach your drinking water. Have your septic system checked out and repaired on a regular basis so contaminants from leaking systems do not reach the lake. Restore eroding shorelines so sediment that carries phosphorus does not reach the lake and cause algal blooms and harm fish habitat.

How do I get all these things done? Let the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (MLLWMG) help you! They would be glad to visit your property and make suggestions about things you can do to make your property more “lake friendly”. They can design and build shoreline restorations to stop your shore from eroding and recommend native plants, trees and shrubs that will protect your shoreline. The

group has rain barrels available at 50% off the regular price and they can offer financial assistance for qualifying BMP projects on your lakeshore. Low interest loans are available to assist with large projects like septic system upgrades. Contact the MLLWMG at 218-927-6565 or 320-983-2160 to get started!



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