

Cedar Meadow Lake Watershed District

- Newsletter -

September 2008

Annual Draw Down To Begin September 28

Please plan to **remove your boats and floats from the water by October 5**. The District will again coordinate our draw down with the draw down at Burncoat Pond. Both draw downs will be conducted simultaneously, which will mean that water levels in Cedar Meadow Lake will fall very slowly during October.

As has been the practice in the past, the flash boards and lower gate valve will be used to gradually lower the water levels to approximately five feet below the spillway elevation for weed control and dam repair purposes. The water will be held at this elevation until the exposed portion of the lake bottom thoroughly freezes to kill the weeds. The lower gate will then be closed to allow water levels to rise to the spillway channel elevation where the open channel will maintain water levels at between two and two and one half feet below the spillway elevation for the remainder of the winter. The lower gate will be opened as necessary during the winter to achieve the desired ice and water levels to minimize ice damage to shoreline structures. The flash boards will be reinstalled in the spillway channel after the final ice cap clears in March.

Dam Inspection / Repair

Water is seeping through the dam at several locations. This seepage was discovered during routine self-inspections and confirmed as part of a State mandated inspection by the engineering firm Fuss and O'Neill last October. Correction of these leaks is critical to the long term integrity and operating cost of the dam. Our dam is considered to be in only "fair" condition by the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety as a result of these leaks and the close proximity of trees below the dam. Failure to correct these conditions could result in a "poor" condition designation and the need for frequent and expensive engineering firm dam inspections. Work continues with our legal counsel to find a way to legally gain access to the land below the dam to remove the problematic trees.

Proprietor Phil Stiles put on his scuba gear and did a visual underwater inspection of the dam surface in hopes of finding the source of the seepage. No obvious leaks were detected. Management Committee Chairman Paul Dufresne examined the same surface area with his underwater camera and, also, could not locate the source of the seepage. A professional dive team that specializes in underwater dam inspection and repair has been hired and will conduct a thorough underwater inspection under the supervision of R. H. White Construction during late September. Leaks that cannot be sealed by this team will be corrected by R. H. White in November when the lake is drawn down approximately 5 feet.

Closing In On Mortgage Payoff

Mortgage payment #132 will be paid at the end of this month. Once paid, only twelve more monthly payments will remain and our twelve year mortgage to purchase and repair the dam will be paid in full. Repayment of the mortgage is the single most expensive item on our annual budget and typically represents at least one half of the total budget.

Water, water, everywhere - especially in the late afternoon

If you thought that this summer was unusually wet, you were correct. We took a look at historic weather data for Worcester to find that this past summer was the second wettest in the last twenty years. Average precipitation for June, July and August over this period was 12.00 inches while we experienced 15.99 inches this past summer, 31% above average. More rain fell during this past July than in an other July during the past twenty years. Average rainfall over this period in the month of July was 3.90 inches while we experienced 7.45 inches this year, 90% more than average. We are not aware of any easily accessible records to prove it, but we must have set a record for afternoon outdoor-activity-spoiler rainfall this past summer. "Afternoon thundershowers" was seemingly built into most weather forecasts!

What's good for lawns is also good for aquatic vegetation

All this rainfall was good for growing vegetation, on land and under water. Seasonal brooks feeding the lake that are ordinarily dry for a good part of June, July and August, never stopped running this summer. Water never stopped flowing over the spillway. The flow of all this water through the lake also brought a lot of nutrients to the weed population. Weeds thrived in the shallow cove areas where water levels are four to six foot deep. These areas are shallow enough to allow the sun to stimulate weed growth but just deep enough to be out of the effective range of annual draw downs.

Water Quality

Management Committee member Wayne Ridley continues to periodically collect water samples which are analyzed by Proprietor Mike Dupuis at no cost to the District. Water clarity remains excellent and the lake bottom can be easily be seen from the surface. Total phosphorus readings, an indicator of nutrients suspended in the water, have been slightly elevated because of the flow of water into the lake, but were well within the acceptable range.

Your Elected Officials Want To Hear From You

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the lake and dam, please call one of the following elected officials:

Paul Defresne, Chairman, Management Committee	508 892-0173
Tommy Lee, Vice Chairman, Management Committee	508 892-3750
Wayne Ridley, Member, Management Committee	508 892-8684
Dick Johnston, District Clerk	508 892-1203
Terry O'Coin, District Treasurer	508 347-6863

Have a Great Fall and Winter!