

Reduce Your Wake for Lake Health

Large wake has a negative impact on lake health. Some of the impacts are:

- Shoreline erosion.
- Impaired water quality from increased sediment in the water.
- Loss of shoreline vegetation, which helps stabilize shorelines and provides valuable habitat for fish and wildlife.
- Increase the likelihood of algae blooms in the lake.



Wake boats can especially cause large, damaging wakes. The University of Minnesota conducted a study on the impact of wake surfing boats and found that wakes boats create maximum wave heights roughly two-to-three times higher than other boats. The wake surfing boats also created more powerful waves, meaning it took a longer time for them to dissipate. This suggests wake boat are more easily damaging to the environment if not properly handled. This newspaper article summarizes the study findings well:

<https://www.minnpost.com/environment/2022/02/will-new-study-on-wakesurfing-cause-the-sport-to-wipeout-on-some-minnesota-lakes/>.

Wake surfing boats can also disturb the lake bottom in addition to shorelines. The prop wash points down at an angle that agitates lake bottoms up to a depth of 16 feet or more, according to the Sierra Club. This disturbance stirs up contaminants, uproots native plants, and increases turbidity which warms the water and destroys ecosystems. Lake bottom disturbance also reduces the efficiency of alum treatments, since these treatments work by trapping phosphorus in the lake floor sediment. Therefore, the large wake from wake boats can have a compounding effect on lake ecosystems. If you own a wake boat please be conscientious of these impacts and reduce your wake.

The DNR has resources about reducing and minding your wake. You can view them here:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/own-your-wake.html>

