



# Nature Alberta inspires change in lakeside property care

EDMONTON, Alberta - When it comes to lakeside property care, Nature Alberta is happy things are trending back to their natural state. “For a long time, you would see a lot of perfectly groomed lawns on cabins and lakeside properties,” explains Greg Boorman, Project Manager for Nature Alberta. “The belief was that it was beautiful, but the impact of fertilizers and pesticides was not. They have a huge impact on the environment and on property values due to lake pollution.”

The Pigeon Lake community felt the impact and chose to take action. Last year, with the support of Nature Alberta, the Summer Village of Grandview passed a bylaw banning the use of lawn fertilizers and herbicides within its municipal boundaries, which Boorman says was a great step forward. “When planning a restful weekend at the cabin, lake health is typically the last thing on people’s minds; not because owners don’t care about their impact, but because they don’t realize it,” says Boorman. “We’re pleased to provide them with tools to not only enjoy their summer, but also to preserve the land they’ve purchased.”

Adapted from a BC coastal initiative, Nature Alberta provides *Living by Water*, an educational program that encourages lake stewardship by promoting environmentally-friendly shoreline management. Advisors visit properties to evaluate everything from the shoreline health to the products used in the home. Owners are provided with a site-specific report that provides opportunities to reduce their environmental impact. “It’s educational, but we also want it to be fun,” says Boorman. “We’re not the environmental police. We’re here to help.”

The *Living by Water* project, which is available across the province, was recently recognized as a finalist for an Emerald Award in the *Emerald Challenge* category. The uniquely-Albertan award, presented by the Alberta Emerald Foundation, recognizes environmental excellence and leadership in the area of water. “We’ve been working on this program for the past 14 years,” says Boorman. “It’s great to be recognized in this way. Not only does it make us proud of the more than 750 residents that have reduced their negative impacts on the lake and shoreline, but it also reminds us that our work is worthwhile.”

If you're interested in a *Living by Water* assessment of your lakeside property, email Greg Boorman at [lbw@naturealberta.ca](mailto:lbw@naturealberta.ca).

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