



# The Amston Laker

## A Note From Our President

Hi neighbors,

With the start of the 2021 summer season, I want to acknowledge all the residents who in one way or another were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a community, our thoughts and best wishes continue to be with you.

With the weather warming up and more of us venturing back outside after what seemed like a year in hibernation, I encourage everyone to use their best judgement to help keep our community safe and on the road to recovery.

The corner has been turned, so let's all do our best to stop the spread and before too long we will all find ourselves fully enjoying our great community and all that it has to offer.

As always, be safe and be smart,

Sincerely,

Frank Hoisl



If you haven't been receiving our periodic email blasts please go to our website [www.amstonlake.org](http://www.amstonlake.org) and sign up. Don't miss another informative update!

# Understanding Lake Health

## What is lake health?

A healthy lake is one whose physical, biological and chemical properties are in equilibrium. This balance provides the stability that allows native aquatic organisms to flourish and conditions that support a clean lake we can enjoy – where the plants and fish are healthy and the water is clear.

## How can we tell if our lake is healthy?

A combination of methods is needed because a single indicator of lake health doesn't tell the full story. Some of these methods measure ecosystem functions (e.g., primary productivity and nutrient cycling); ecosystem structure (e.g., the types and amount of plant life); internal processes (e.g., water circulation, temperature, and light penetration); and external inputs (e.g., nutrients, and sediment and chemical loads coming into the lake). These data are then compared to pre-established management goals to determine relative lake health, or are used to derive new goals.

## What does the Amston Lake Health Committee do to keep the lake healthy?

- Develops lake management guidelines and procedures
- Reviews and makes comparisons to historical records collected since 1994
- Minimizes erosion that will enter our lake
- Works with town officials on wastewater connections to the main sewer and road drainage into the lake
- Stormwater collection and testing of samples from inlets (13 locations monitored)
- Biweekly deepwater measurements, and collection and testing of samples monthly from a deepwater site
- Collects phytoplankton samples monthly at the deepwater site
- Works closely with our limnologists, Aquatic Ecosystems Research (AER), on all deepwater and stormwater samples collected; reviews plant surveys, phytoplankton and yearly reports
- Works with other Amston Lake committees so we all work to keep our lake healthy

**We are always looking for people who are interested in joining the Amston Lake Health Committee.** If you're interested, please contact committee chair Frank Hoisl at [hoislfr@gmail.com](mailto:hoislfr@gmail.com).



## Improve Drainage and Control Runoff On Your Property

- Collect roof runoff in rain barrels and use to water household or landscape plants.
- Install gravel trenches or French drains along patios and driveways to collect and filter rainfall and snow melt (direct drains away from your foundations).
- Use landscape mulch or wood chips to stabilize eroded areas or exposed earth.
- Plant thick-growing, hardy ground covers on steep or disturbed slopes.
- Minimize lawn area and maximize the number of shrubs and trees to promote filtration and reduce runoff.
- Reduce impervious surfaces on your property by minimizing the amount of concrete, asphalt or packed gravel.
- Use permeable materials such as bricks or stone for driveways, walks, patios and landscapes to maximize the amount of water soaking into the ground.
- Increase filtration by directing roof gutters and pavement runoff to rain gardens, grass swales, vegetation filter strips or dry wells.

## Ordinance Change

A group of residents petitioned the board this spring with the intention of prohibiting smoking on District properties. At the May annual meeting the District residents voted to prohibit smoking on all District properties, and the ordinance became effective July 12, 2021. The revised ordinances can be found on the website.



## Tree Management Plan

Last fall several members of the Amston Lake District Board of Directors became concerned about the health of trees around the lake. Visual inspections showed issues with a number of trees on District property. The Board decided to solicit professional opinions with the goal of developing a long-term tree management plan.

Board member Jeff Greenfield interviewed local arborists seeking their recommendations, and in March the Board of Directors awarded a contract to CT Landscape and Tree. The most significant problems identified were with Ash trees, which will be of no surprise to residents who are aware of the devastation caused by the Emerald Ash Borer beetle in Connecticut and beyond, including to many thousands of Ash trees in Hebron and Lebanon. Some residents have already removed Ash trees on their own properties. The infected trees are either already dead or are dying, creating potential safety issues. But it's not only Ash trees; dead or dying Elms and Red Maples were also identified on District property.



The Board authorized the removal of trees of concern at Lollipop Beach and Cove right-of-way (ROW) and this work has been completed by our contractor. The Board also has authorized and scheduled removal of trees at Oakland ROW, the Berglund property and Main Beach. Additionally, the Board is working with the Town of Hebron concerning the removal of a large Ash tree at Elsmere ROW.

## On All District Properties, Including Beaches & ROWs:

- Fireworks are not allowed at any time.
- A recent ordinance change prohibits all smoking.
- No dogs permitted from April 1 – September 30.

### On Your Property

- Prevent sewer system damage -  
REMEMBER: No wipes in the pipes, TP only.
- You must obtain permission from the ALD Board of Directors and Inland-Wetlands of the town before doing any work on your waterfront (in or near the water).
- Do not add sand to your property; while this practice was permitted at one time, we have since learned of the damage it can do to the lake, and this is now prohibited.

### Summer Safety & Lake Health Tips

- Keep a life jacket handy. Even if you can swim well, you (or someone near you) may need it. And remember – all boaters are required to carry them onboard.
- Swimming across the lake? Make sure you're visible to boaters by wearing a brightly colored bathing cap or clothing, or using the "buddy system" with a boater who stays near you.
- Boats must keep a distance of 12 feet or more from swimmers, and must stay out of the swimming areas at both beaches.
- Remember, the speed limit around the lake is 25 mph – please observe the speed limit for the safety of all who walk or ride their bikes on area roads.
- Lock your car when not in use. Every summer we see an increase in car break-ins, and last summer we even had a car stolen from our lake community.
- Pick up pet waste in your yard or when you walk your dog. This can help keep bacteria as well as harmful nutrients that promote algae growth out of our lake.
- Secure your belongings, so that a sudden breeze doesn't blow things like plastic bags or styrofoam cups into the lake. And make sure you take with you anything you bring into the beaches or ROWs.



**Remember**, the speed limit on the roads in the Amston Lake District is **25 mph**, the speed limit on the private Lebanon roads is **15 mph**.

**NO DOGS PERMITTED**  
from April 1 –  
September 30



### Thanks to our contributors who made the 2021 newsletter happen:

Jeff Arpin  
Liz Bowen

Anita Connor  
Jeff Greenfield

Frank Hoisl  
Todd LaMontagne

John Matra  
Teri Nixon

Karen Patterson  
Jean Waleszczyk



# Amston Lake Association

John Matra, ALA President

Five years ago, my wife and I started thinking of buying a home in a lake community. A Google search based on “best lakes in Connecticut” produced many lists which included a place called Amston Lake. This was followed by a visit. We were so impressed with the beauty of the lake that we bought our house. A social aspect and strong sense of community were also important to us and, as luck would have it, we found both here at Amston Lake.

There are **two distinct and separate groups** that take care of our community: the **Amston Lake District (ALD)** – the regulatory group, and the **Amston Lake Association (ALA)** – the social and cultural group, work to improve lake living for all residents.

Founded in 1942, the Amston Lake Association (ALA) is a vibrant volunteer 501(c)(7) organization which offers a variety of events for the Amston Lake community. Some of our past events include the 4th of July Parade, Lake Day, Food Trucks, Lobster Fest, Fishing Derbys, Chocolate Bingo, Tiki Night, Movies on the Beach, Holiday Parties, Craft Nights, Book Club, Yoga, Oktoberfest and Potluck Dinners. We also maintain our clubhouse at 16 Wood Acres Road, where we hold many of our events and meetings. After a year of adjustment due to COVID, we are planning to get back on track this upcoming season with as many of our traditional activities as we can.

So, whether you’re a new or established resident, year-round or seasonal, renter or homeowner, or any combination of the above, please consider joining the ALA this year. Check out our website [www.amstonlakeassociation.com](http://www.amstonlakeassociation.com) to learn more about ALA and upcoming events.

We look forward to seeing you!

## Amston Lake District

Amston Lake is managed by the Amston Lake District (ALD) Board of Directors, a group of nine of your neighbors who volunteer and are elected to oversee lake management, environmental monitoring, and neighborhood security, among other things. A yearly budget and District tax rate is voted on by residents at our annual meeting in May, where board elections also take place. Check out our District website, [amstonlake.org](http://amstonlake.org), to learn

more about how to obtain boat, parking and lake passes; District meeting schedules; and property owner tax information. We welcome you to get involved by attending monthly board meetings, running for a board position, joining a committee or other volunteering opportunities. We encourage you to sign up on the website for our “blast” email list, which will keep you up-to-date on all current information and important notices around the lake.

### Amston Lake District (ALD)

- District governance & tax collection
- Boat slips, racks & inspections
- Lake health & management
- Maintenance of District-owned roads, waters, dams and property
- Beach & boat passes

### Amston Lake Association (ALA)

- Social Activities
- Maintain Clubhouse
- **All Things FUN**



## Aquatic Plant Community Assessment

You may notice a power boat on the lake from time to time – it is part of the Lake Health Committee's aquatic plant monitoring activity. The committee has teamed with our limnologist from Aquatic Ecosystem Research (AER) to monitor what and where the aquatic plants are within the lake.

AER is also the company the District has retained to evaluate the water quality of the lake. As you may know we also provide a wide range of lake water sample data to AER and they provide the District summary water quality reports that are available on our website.

## Online Auction

COVID-19 brought us some new ways of doing things in 2020. Each year we ask our residents to remove their boats from the beaches and ROWs by November 1, and each year we end up with a few boats that no one removes or claims. We make our best effort to find the owners (one of the many reasons we ask that you have a current sticker on your boat), but we always end up with a few strays at the end of the season. So, what to do? Pay to bring them to the dump? Put them by the side of the

road? Or try to make some money for the District. Because of COVID-19, we couldn't hold an in-person auction, so from September 4-7, we held an online auction. We auctioned off 3 canoes, a kayak, an old boat ramp and...a dead fish.. Ok the fish wasn't really dead – it was included as a joke to make people check out the auction. We ended up raising \$250 for the District and some residents got some really good deals! Keep an eye on the email blasts for news of this year's auction.

## Thank you Volunteers!

The Beaches and Right of Ways Committee (B & R) would like to thank all of the residents who volunteered this year to assist in the ongoing maintenance needed to improve and preserve the quality of life in the Amston Lake District (ALD). There are many opportunities to assist the ALD and your neighbors.

The committee and volunteers meet monthly to discuss ongoing maintenance, new projects and continuous improvements throughout the ALD. The B & R Committee is responsible for monitoring and maintaining Main Beach, Lollipop Beach and the rights of way (ROWs) in Hebron (Cove, Elsmere, Francis, Meadowbrook and Oakland) and Lebanon (Ryan Terrace and Spafford). A volunteer steward for each beach and right of way brings issues/concerns from the community to the committee meetings for discussion. We are currently in need of stewards for Main Beach and Meadowbrook ROW.

The B & R Committee collaborates with the Lake Health Committee when needed to address shoreline erosion or other situations that affect the health of our lake. In the fall and spring our dedicated volunteers gather to rake leaves from the water and shoreline of the beaches and rights of way. This important task helps to control algae growth that comes from the high levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium of decaying leaves.

## Beach and Boat Passes for the 2021-2022 Season

The Amston Lake District Board of Directors unanimously agreed to continue accepting the black beach and boat passes that were distributed in the Spring of 2019. These passes have a printed expiration date of 6/30/2020 that is now extended to 6/30/2022.

Early last year we ordered new orange passes for the 2020-2021 season, but then the pandemic hit, and we made the decision to not distribute those passes. These orange passes were and will continue to be used for new residents of the District. So, if you see someone with an orange pass, they have more than likely recently moved to our beautiful little corner of the world. Be sure to welcome them!

We will also issue these orange stickers to anyone who misplaced or discarded their old passes or who have purchased a new watercraft. See the ALD website for details.

**If you are new to the District, or you have recently purchased a new boat, you can request new passes by contacting ALD Board Director, Todd LaMontagne at [tmlamontagne@yahoo.com](mailto:tmlamontagne@yahoo.com).** You can find the registration form on the website. Please include your District address, mailing address, required number of boat passes and a brief description of your boat (type and color). Have a safe and exciting season at Amston Lake!

### WARNING!

Amston Lake District is a private, residents only community. All vehicles and watercraft must display **CURRENT** district parking passes and boating permits.

A description of your vehicle/watercraft will be noted. Multiple offenses may result in fines and/or vehicle towing/watercraft removal at the owner's expense.

For more information visit [www.amstonlake.org](http://www.amstonlake.org)



Any motor vehicle or watercraft on Amston Lake Property **without a valid sticker** could earn a **new violation sticker**. It's a **WARNING** and can lead to fines and/or removal from the property by Amston Lake District.

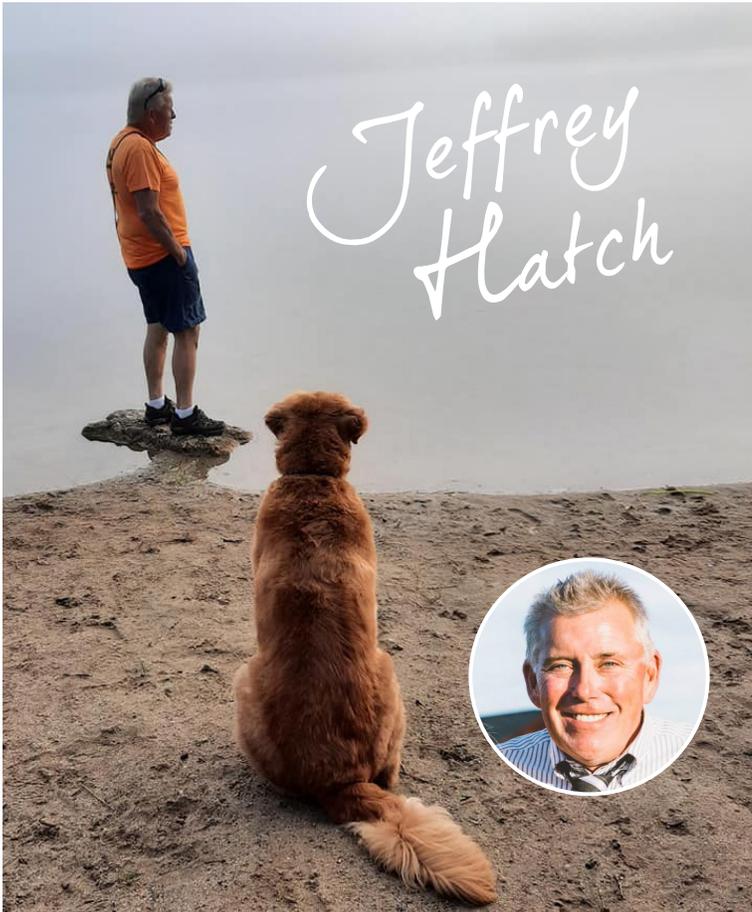
### 2021 Boat/trailer Inspectors on call 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.:

Jim Delisle	860-707-6512
Dave Arnold	860-228-1944
Carl Wool	860-334-9754
Al Fichtel	860-338-4300
Marge Arnold	860-228-1944
Craig Nowak	203-868-6728

## Protect Our Lake From Invasive Species

For the safety of our lake, the Amston Lake District requires that all boats/trailers must be inspected.

- Boat launching off trailers is strictly prohibited from private property. All boats launched from trailers must first be inspected at the Main beach boat launch area to check for the presence of invasive weeds (see list of inspectors to the left or visit [www.amstonlake.org](http://www.amstonlake.org) for more details).
- If you bring any boat from any other body of water, you must first either clean it thoroughly or dry out your boat, trailer, and fishing gear for a minimum of five days to prevent foreign species contamination by invasive weeds.
- If you have guests or tenants who bring their boats from other bodies of water, please make sure that they follow the “Clean, Drain & Dry” protocol.



## In Memoriam

Sadly, our friend and neighbor, Jeff Hatch, passed away unexpectedly last December. On a cold March evening, his friends and family gathered around a bonfire on the Main Beach in Hebron to remember him. They were joined by his beloved dogs Shelbie and Hunter. They lit candles and shared poems and stories of his generous nature and love of pranks. Often seen working around the lake, Jeff will be greatly missed.