

SPRING ISSUE 2012

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SSCA Spring Newsletter

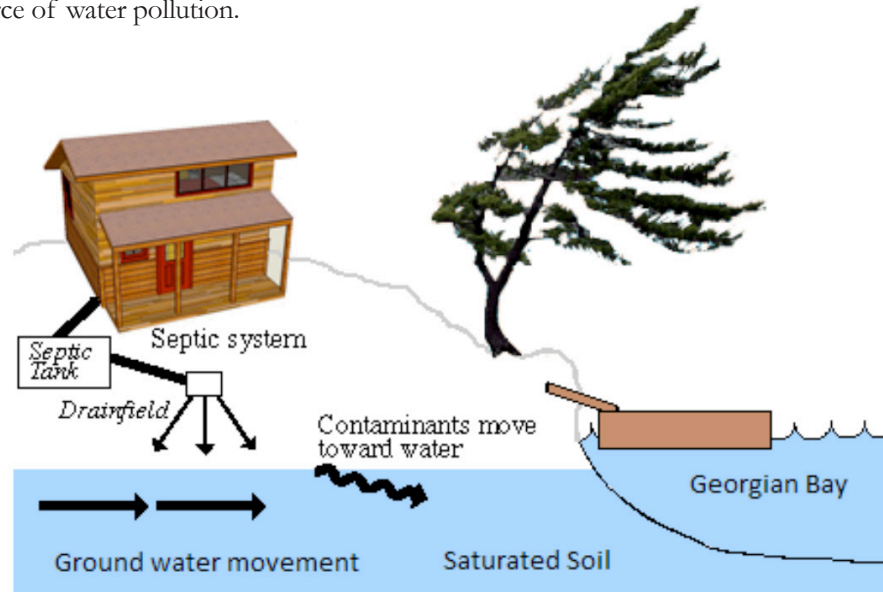
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Taking Care of your Septic System

- Carolyn Singer, Environment Committee

As we all head back on the Bay for another summer season, I thought we should all be reminded of the importance of setting up a good septic tank maintenance program. Most of us would like to forget about our septic systems once they are installed. Sometimes they can be hard to forget when a heavy rain causes your toilet to back up! A well planned maintenance plan can make the difference between a stinky toilet (and potential for contamination of your drinking water) and a system that you don't have to worry about. Poorly maintained septic systems can be a significant source of water pollution.



Here are some suggestions on how to take care of your septic system:

ORGANIC ONLY!

Don't flush diapers, paper towels, female products, food products or grease down the toilet.

Avoid chemicals

Never flush toxic chemicals, medication, paints, solvents etc. These products could kill the good bacteria in the tank, and may end up in the Bay (and in your drinking water).

Avoid building on your septic system

Try not to build on or near any part of the septic system and make sure that you have easy access to the tank for pump outs.

Conserve water

Use biodegradable cleaners

Many cleaning products contain bleach and other antibacterial chemicals that kill the good bacteria that help keep your system running well. Use biodegradable cleaners whenever possible.

Lightening Protection

If your system requires a submersible pump, install a lightning arrestor to help protect it from power surges.

Inspect and pump

Hire a professional to inspect and pump out your system every three to five years (or when the tank's volume is about one-third full).

What SUP? The Newest Water Sport...

- Natalie Scott

As the hot summer weather is approaching and the beautiful waters of Georgian Bay are warming, memories of your favorite water sports are sure to be getting you eager to break out the paddles, sails & skis. However as you begin your active summer of 2012 consider the newest and most talked about water sport - it's versatile, inexpensive and best of all it's simple. Stand Up Paddling, or Paddle Boarding as it is also known, originated in Hawaii in the 1960's as a more accessible and easier style of surfing that can be practiced in a variety of water conditions.

The benefits of Stand Up Paddling, or "SUP" as it's commonly referred to, is that it offers not only a way to explore your watery surroundings but to also gently work the important core muscles that are critical for everyday movement and functionality... And most importantly it's fun and environmentally friendly!

SUP'ing is done by standing on a large and relatively stable surf-style board, using a long paddle to propel through the water. It's so versatile that users can range from young children to retirees and everyone else in between with the level of difficulty being determined by the user. One can race around the island, softly paddle at sunset or lay down on the board for a relaxing break.

As in past years, the SSCA Programs Committee is continuing to build upon it's growing repertoire of fun, educational and inclusive programs for it's varied members and their interests. This year is no different, as we have arranged to have Northern Stand Up Paddle visit the Association's property to provide SUP demos and lessons for interested enthusiasts! Information will be shared in the coming weeks through email blast and the newly launched Facebook page!

See you on the Bay!



HELP WANTED:

- Penny Pepperell, *Georgian Bay Forever Org*

Water quality monitors; wetland stewards; cottagers to billet Georgian Bay scientists; and captains to ferry them to their research sites

Water Quality Monitors

Georgian Bayers really really care about water quality, and helping to keep it pristine is what Georgian Bay Forever is all about. That being the case, we are looking for volunteers in our shoreline communities to collect water samples this summer. Training on proper sample handling and collection will be provided and it's fun. What we need is commitment. More details will be available later this spring, but at this point, we would expect samples to be taken six times over the summer, one per month from May to October. If you have a couple of hours a month, we would appreciate your help.



Wetland Stewards

The Adopt-a-Wetland program is designed to engage residents in the long-term monitoring of their local wetlands. Monitoring would be an excellent stepping stone for someone interested in a career in science or simply someone who wants to learn more about their immediate environment. The training materials and field guides are easy for novices to use and understand. This would be a great excuse to get out into your special Georgian Bay wetland for a couple of hours each month.

Billeting Scientists

Our scientists need places to stay in our shoreline communities while they are doing their research. They're great company, bring their own food, sleeping bags and beer, and they help out in the kitchen. Most importantly, they're interesting people with a deep knowledge of biology who would welcome your questions.

Captains to Ferry Biologist to their Research Sites

The research teams are typically in the field from Monday to Friday depending on weather conditions. They require a boat that can access the shallows and an experienced captain to ferry them to their research sites. Duties typically include a drop off in the morning and pickup in the late afternoon: nothing onerous. If you want to find out what it is actually like to be a field biologist, this would be a wonderful opportunity, and a great education for your kids.

Hosting families and boat captains aren't necessarily the same people. If you want to offer your assistance in one role or another, or even better, team up with a neighbour, please let us know.

Georgian Bay Forever would welcome your help on a number of fronts, from events to fundraising, so please let us know if you could lend us a hand either during the summer months or at other times.

To find out more about these volunteer opportunities, please call Executive Director David Sweetnam at 908 880 4945 x 1 or check out our website for details as they become available at www.georgianbayforever.org.

Georgian Bay Forever is a community response to the growing need for major research and education projects to sustain the Georgian Bay aquatic ecosystem and the quality of life its communities and visitors enjoy.

