

Water quality report 2011:

Testing of three ponds: Oldham, Furnace, and Stetson are nearly completed. While all three experienced blue green algae, conditions remain stable and very similar to the previous two years.

Two ponds have been treated for blue green algae: Oldham and Furnace.

The use of phytomycin for Oldham proved to be useful and did effectively eliminate the blue green algae. Water quality improved as evidenced by chemical analysis and secchi disc measurements. Dissolved oxygen measurements were similar to previous years at the 4 and 7 foot level, but at 11 feet the water was completely anoxic (nearly devoid of oxygen). Oldham was closed a good portion of the early and midsummer due to blue green algae, with state requiring certain parameters to reopen for human use.

Furnace pond was treated with copper sulfate, effectively eliminating blue green algae and improving water clarity and aesthetics. Furnace remained open for the summer and residents feel the water quality was significantly improved. It appears that copper sulfate is a superior agent for the treatment of blue green algae, but unfortunately is not considered safe to use in the presence of endangered species, as found in Oldham pond.

Stetson Pond's water quality appears better this year than last, with better chemical analysis and secchi disc measurements.

Little Sandy Bottom has not been tested in a number of years, but from physical appearance looks good without significant algae, and weeds are predominantly on the Rt 27 side appear to be regular pond weed.

Improvement in water quality is dependent on the following best management practices:

1. Don't dump (or allow others to dump) organic matter into the pond
2. Eliminate the use of phosphorus based fertilizers near the pond or near storm drains
3. Grow buffer zones near the water and use berms at street level to prevent water runoff into the ponds
4. Support the use of new storm drain technology allowing cleaning with good water filtration throughout the watershed.
5. Educate your neighbors and friends- awareness is the first step to activism.
6. Join weed watcher program and monitor your water front property- pick up trash, hand pull weeds- especially invasive ones.

Thank you to all who helped with pond clean up and water testing this year. We strongly encourage Oldham and furnace residents to step up and help us- water sampling, taking samples to analytic labs on an every other week basis is time consuming- more assistance makes it easier on everyone.

Patricia McCabe, Water Quality Chair, PWA