

JOHNS LAKE ASSOCIATION NEWS LETTER

Message from the President

April 2024

The Johns Lake Association is a Not-for-Profit Corporation with Objectives to:

- Through environmentally appropriate means, reduce the quantity of undesirable aquatic vegetation to an acceptable level.
- Maintain the healthy lake water levels.
- Develop and implement a long-range plan aimed at improving the quality of the lake water.
- Improve all phases of recreation on the lake.
- Provide input to governmental regulation bodies on issues that affect Johns Lake.
- Promote and provide a forum for sharing of information on scientific, administrative and financial aspects of lake and watershed management.
- Affiliate with the Florida Lake Management Society.

The Newsletter is published by the Johns Lake Association and is provided to members and other interested parties to provide information concerning current conditions on the lake and other issues effecting the lake.

Spring has arrived as witnessed by the change in weather and the end of the Oak leaves falling. I have recently seen the American Eagles that nest in Oakland, are back on their nests and the bass beds are back. And finally, some lakefront owners told me they can now see the bottom of Johns Lake at the end of their dock for the first time. These are all great signs that Johns Lake is healthy. Our water level is currently low (93.99 on 4-1-24) for this time of year but the good news is rain is forecasted in 10 days or so and the lake level will most likely go up fairly fast.

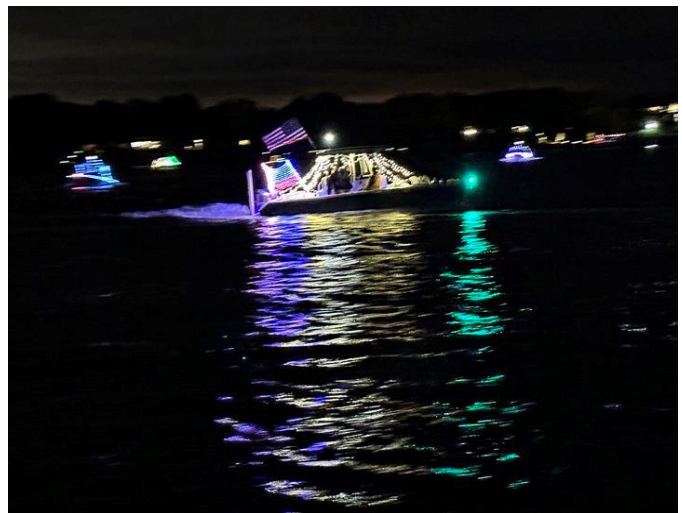
The lake will be treated for hydrilla later this month according to the FWC!

Fortunately, I was wrong in predicting the water level would go down significantly during the recent Winter months. Instead, we received small amounts of rain consistently during this normally dry time of year and the lake level stayed fairly consistent.

JLA is a non-profit organization, funded by lakefront owners, focused on protecting Johns Lake water quality. JLA's mission is to preserve and restore the high-water quality and the traditional character of John's Lake, watersheds and related natural resources. The long-term survival of Johns Lake is critical to present and future generations.

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Johns Lake Holiday Boat Parade

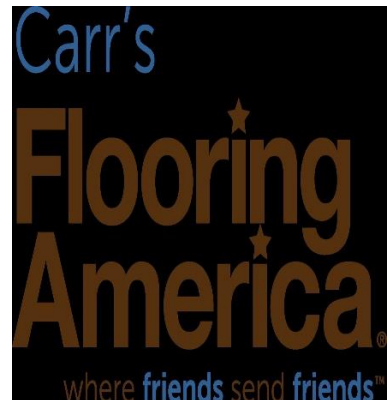
By Karen Quill

The 2023 annual Johns Lake Holiday Boat Parade came with some challenging circumstances. After closely monitoring the weather, the date of the parade was moved a week later and much to our satisfaction, it turned out to be the right move! There were torrential downpours on the original date, and although the reschedule date was windy and a bit cold, it did not rain, and as a result we had many boats participate!

It is never an ideal situation to change the parade date, as we know many homeowners plan special events to celebrate the parade, so we thank you for supporting our decision to move the date to December 17th (originally December 10th) and are VERY thankful to all the boaters who did an amazing job decorating their vessels for the enjoyment of all who watched the parade. AS ALWAYS, the décor didn't disappoint and the "holiday spirit" (even with the cold temperatures and wind) was on display in a big way! THANK YOU to all the boaters who participated! We hope to see you back in 2024!

We look forward to another great event in December 2024! We will post information on our website www.johnslakeflorida.com, as well as on our Facebook Page **Johns Lake Association** when there is more information to share.

Thank you to our Gold Parade Sponsors! Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor for the 2024 Boat Parade please send us an email at admin@johnslakeflorida.com for information.



[Johns Lake Association Facebook Page](#)

Johns Lake Outfall Update

By Scott Boyd

Good day Johns Lake area residents. The Town of Oakland, Orange County and the community developer of Oakland Park have taken the lead on pulling together the latest study that focuses on the canal from HW 50 to the West Orange Trail and then on to Lake Apopka. The stake holders are meeting regularly with the developer of Oakland Park who is actively addressing stabilization of the canal on the North end where the canal goes through Oakland Park and then to Lake Apopka. We published the full report on our website at [Outfall Canal Evaluation Study](#).

With the scope of the study starting from HW 50 north to Lake Apopka there will be numerous participants in the upcoming discussions. I will continue to reach out to Orange County Public Works and EPD (Environmental Protection Division) regarding the County efforts and have regular discussions with Oakland Park management.

The primary ongoing issue is canal maintenance funding and possible improvements needed along the route of the canal to Lake Apopka. JLA has been an advocate for this important issue for years and will continue to do so and will keep you updated on future developments in our upcoming newsletters. The canal is currently dry due to the lower lake level.

The Impact of Septic Systems on Water Quality in Florida Lakes

PROVIDED BY CREWS ENVIRONMENTAL

Septic systems play a crucial role in managing wastewater in residential and rural areas. However, if not properly maintained, they can have detrimental effects on water quality, especially in sensitive ecosystems like Johns Lake. This article explores the impact of septic systems on water quality in Florida's lakes, the consequences of poor maintenance, best practices for septic system service, and the regulations and policies related to septic systems in this region.

Impact of Septic Systems on Water Quality in Florida's Lakes Water Quality Concerns:

Septic systems can contribute to the contamination of Florida's lakes with nutrients and harmful pathogens. When septic systems fail or are inadequately maintained, untreated wastewater containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and bacteria can leach into the surrounding groundwater, ultimately finding its way into lakes and other water bodies. This pollution may lead to harmful algal blooms, oxygen depletion, and an overall decline in water quality.

The Consequences of Poor Septic System Maintenance Health Risks:

Neglected septic systems can pose serious health risks to both humans and aquatic life. Pathogenic bacteria and viruses in untreated wastewater can contaminate drinking water sources, recreational areas, and fisheries, potentially causing waterborne illnesses. Additionally, excess nutrients from septic system effluent can fuel the growth of harmful algal blooms, which produce toxins harmful to aquatic organisms and can disrupt the natural balance of lake ecosystems. Neglecting the septic system maintenance may cost you a hefty amount while hiring a professional for septic system service.

Best Practices for Septic System Maintenance

1. Regular Inspections Regular Inspections:

Periodic inspections by qualified professionals are essential to identify any signs of septic system malfunction or damage. This **septic system service** can help detect issues such as leaks, clogs, or mechanical failures early on, allowing for timely repairs and preventing further damage to the system and surrounding environment.

2. Pumping the Septic Tank Pumping Maintenance:

Regular septic tank pumping is crucial to remove accumulated solids and prevent the system from becoming overloaded. The frequency of pumping depends on factors such as tank size, household size, and water usage. A professional septic service provider can assess these factors and recommend an appropriate pumping schedule.

3. Proper Water Usage Water Conservation:

Conserving water helps reduce the strain on septic systems. Simple practices such as repairing leaks, using water-efficient fixtures, and spreading out laundry and dishwashing activities can minimize the amount of wastewater entering the septic system, promoting its effective treatment and reducing the risk of pollution.

4. Protect the Drain Field Preserving the Drain Field:

The drain field, also known as the leach field, is a critical septic system component that helps filter and treat wastewater. To maintain its functionality, it is essential to avoid parking vehicles or heavy equipment on the drain field, planting trees or shrubs with extensive root systems near it and diverting excessive rainwater or surface runoff toward the area.

5. Use Septic-Friendly Products Septic-Safe Products

Using septic-friendly household products, such as biodegradable cleaners and toilet paper, can help maintain a healthy balance of beneficial bacteria in the septic tank. Harsh chemicals and excessive use of antibacterial products can disrupt the natural microbial activity, impairing the system's ability to treat wastewater effectively.

Regulations and Policies Related to Septic Systems in Florida's Lakes Florida, being home to numerous lakes and sensitive water ecosystems, has implemented regulations and policies to govern septic systems and protect water quality. These regulations aim to ensure proper installation, maintenance, and repair of septic systems, and to prevent pollution, and minimize the impact on Florida's lakes and water bodies. Here are some key regulations and policies related to septic systems in the region:

1. Septic System Permitting: In Florida, septic system installation and modification generally require a permit from the local health department or the environmental regulatory agency. These permits ensure that septic systems are designed and installed correctly, meeting the state's standards and guidelines.

2. Inspection and Evaluation: Regular inspection and evaluation of septic systems are important components of the regulatory framework. Inspections help identify potential issues, assess the

system's functionality, and ensure compliance with the required standards. Depending on the county or municipality, inspections may be required during the installation, property transfer, or periodically.

3. Maintenance and Pumping Requirements: Florida's regulations emphasize the importance of proper septic system maintenance. This includes regular pumping of the septic tank to remove accumulated solids and prevent system overload. The frequency of pumping varies based on factors such as tank size, household size, and water usage, and it is typically recommended every 3 to 5 years.

4. Drain Field Protection: Protecting the drain field is crucial to the proper functioning of septic systems. Regulations often restrict the construction of structures, planting of deep-rooted vegetation, or parking of vehicles over the drain field area to prevent soil compaction and damage to the system's absorption capabilities.

5. Nitrogen-Reducing Systems: In some areas of Florida, particularly those near vulnerable water bodies, regulations require advanced septic systems that incorporate nitrogen-reducing technologies. These systems help minimize the discharge of nitrogen, a nutrient that can contribute to harmful algal blooms and water quality degradation.

6. Compliance and Enforcement: Florida regulatory agencies actively monitor septic systems to ensure compliance with the established regulations. Non-compliance may result in penalties or the requirement for system repairs or upgrades to meet the standards.

7. Public Education and Outreach: The state of Florida promotes public education and outreach programs to raise awareness about the importance of proper septic system maintenance, water conservation, and the impact of septic systems on water quality. These initiatives aim to encourage responsible septic system ownership and foster a culture of environmental stewardship.

Conclusion

It's important for property owners and residents to familiarize themselves with the specific regulations and requirements in their respective counties or municipalities within Florida. Consulting with local health departments, environmental agencies, or septic system professionals can provide further guidance and ensure compliance with the regulations to protect Florida's lakes and water resources.



Photo courtesy of Advanced Septic Services

Johns Lake Minimum Flows and Levels

Source: St. Johns Water Management District website

One way that the St. Johns River Water Management District (District) is working to protect Florida's water resources is through its minimum flows and levels (MFLs) program. As a part of fulfilling its mission and statutory responsibilities, the district establishes MFLs for priority water bodies within its boundaries. MFLs define the limits at which further water withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of an area.

Johns Lake is approximately 2,500 acres and provides a regionally important recreational resource, with good sport fishing, county parks and access for canoeing, kayaking and other watersports. There are also large intact wetland communities on the south and east portions of the lake that provide habitat for numerous wading birds and other fish and wildlife.

The District's MFLs approach involves two separate but interrelated components: 1) MFLs Determination; and 2) MFLs Assessment. The first involves determining a minimum hydrologic regime necessary to protect relevant water resource values. The second involves comparing this MFLs condition to a current-pumping condition to determine the current status of the MFLs. The overall process involves an analysis of ecological, recreational, and hydrological information, all of which undergo independent scientific peer review. Field work and surface water modeling for Johns Lake are ongoing. The Johns Lake MFLs determination is scheduled for completion by the end of 2024.

Let's all continue to do our part to keep Johns Lake an enjoyable place to live!

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