

June 2022 Bulletin



**ITASCA WATERS**

*Team Up for Clean Waters*



**Save the date!**  
**July 7th, at noon**  
**Blue-green Algae**

## "Blue-green Algae: What Causes It and Why You Should Care"

Save the date! July 7<sup>th</sup>, at noon! The fourth in our online Practical Water Wisdom Series, "Blue-green Algae: What Causes It and Why You Should Care" by Dr. Chris Filstrup, an applied limnologist (lake scientist) from the Natural Resources Research Institute in Duluth. Chris will tell us all about what causes blue-green algae to grow in lakes, why it's a problem, and what you can do to keep them away. The one-hour program will include questions from participants.

FYI, blue-green algae (aka Cyanobacteria) create water that stinks, is poisonous to people, pets and livestock, and can cause illnesses from skin rashes to nerve damage to kidney failure. They make water unsafe to drink or swim in. We always have had a little of them in our lakes but when they get too abundant, they can make our beautiful lakes dangerous. In the north country, we are seeing more dense growths of these cells called "algae blooms" that are harmful to us and to our water resources. Scientists are learning that we are having more harmful algae blooms because our



*Floating algae near the shore.  
photo John Downing*



*Water quality sensor being lowered into a  
blue-green algae bloom.  
photo John Downing*

lakes are getting more nutrients in them and the water temperatures are often higher than ever before.

The Practical Water Wisdom series is FREE. Please click here to register in advance.

## Septic System Excitement



For this summer only, Itasca Waters is providing a \$5,000 grant to the Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations (ICOLA) to help pay for septic compliance inspections for shoreline property owners. For more information and an application see [HERE](#).

If you own property anywhere in Itasca County and need to replace your septic system, you may qualify for a zero-interest ten-year loan for septic system replacement resulting from a voluntary inspection. Loan amounts range up to \$25,000 for seasonal and residential property and \$50,000 for business property. For the newest information and application, see [HERE](#)

## June's Practical Water Wisdom video now available on our [website](#)

All past presentation videos are going to be available through our website. On the [Practical Water Wisdom page](#), click "See Video Presentation" next to the session's title.

The third session was "Septic Secrets: Protecting Our Waters with Good Systems". Dr. Sara Heger, a researcher and instructor at the Onsite Sewage Treatment Program UMN Water Resources Center, shared much helpful information about how septic systems work and what you can do to prolong the life of that system. She presented many interesting facts and tips, some that you might find new or surprising.



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Septic Secrets: Protecting our Waters with Good Systems  
Dr. Sara Heger

**PRACTICAL WATER WISDOM SERIES**

Thank you for joining us. We will begin soon.



# What a great day!



## 9th Annual 5th Grade Youth Water Summit

On May 24, after a two-year hiatus, Itasca Waters, ISD 318, and Itasca Area Community Education partnered to organize the 9th annual 5th Grade Youth Water Summit at the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids.

[See More!](#)

## Get Your Shoreland Advisor Visit This Summer!



Shoreland advisors are ready to help you evaluate your shoreline and offer suggestions for improvement. Folks say that the visits are informative and a great way to learn about Itasca Waters.

Eben & Kathleen Spencer valued the advice received and the opportunity



to learn more about Itasca Waters, with Eben enrolling in the AIS Detector Class.

Cathy Bender understands that their flat shoreline is threatened by erosion, especially due to recent flooding. Cathy thinks that [Willow wattles](#) could help.



PRESENTED BY DAVID LICK

*Itasca Waters how-to video:  
Constructing willow wattles*

Yes, I am interested  
in a Shoreland Visit!



*The potential for native plants to mitigate lakeshore flooding was the subject of one visit.*

## Cooperation brings native plants to area projects

### People and plants work together for lakeshore restoration

Last year Itasca Waters partnered with the North Central Research and Outreach Center (NCROC) to grow four types of native plants and grasses for use in future lakeshore restoration projects. The grown plants were placed in pots by the District 318 horticulture class and moved to three native plant demonstration sites developed in cooperation with the City of Grand Rapids, Wabana Township, and the YMCA. All three sites are now established, and plants are growing.





*Native plants flourish at Wabana Town Hall*

Both Bloomers and Beiers are now stocking native plants for the public to purchase.



*Members of the planting team next to informational signage at bridge*

### **Grand Rapids Horticultural students share their skills with community**

On May 16 students from Grand Rapids High School Horticulture class helped transplant native shoreline plants. These plants, including Wild Bergamot, hyssop, red stalked aster, and Canada tick trefoil were grown from seed by the horticulture class and the North Central Research and Outreach Center. Two of the volunteers were UMN Master Gardeners.



*Students and volunteers, including Master Gardeners, getting the job done!*

In addition some of the plants were replanted at the KAXE Bridge following up on the planting done by Itasca Waters (IW) last year at the same site. A sign at the KAXE bridge explains what IW is trying to accomplish. In addition to the KAXE bridge, Wabana Township hall and Itasca YMCA garden are demonstration sites. The students were also taken to a shoreline to explain buffers and best management practices around water.



Earlier this year, Itasca Waters partnered with Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations (ICOLA) and the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District to encourage lake associations to work on shoreline erosion, upgrading septic systems ([click here](#)) and addressing aquatic invasive species. While many lake associations are currently working on one or more of these issues, there is more work to be done. For more information see ([click here](#)).

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## Board members are team members!

Are you passionate about your environment, do you want to "Team Up" with other organizations and concerned citizens to maintain abundant, clean water for our continued health, enjoyment and a strong economy? Then we need you!

Itasca Waters is looking for people who will help us with our programs including the 5th Grade Youth Water Summit, Shoreland Advisor Program, Water Wisdom education series and Clean Water Initiative (shoreline, septic and AIS). And we want to hear your ideas for new projects. If you are interested in joining the Itasca Waters board, please email Itasca Waters president Jesse Davis at [jesse@moveitrealestate.com](mailto:jesse@moveitrealestate.com)

Email Jesse  
Davis,  
President





## July is Lakes Appreciation Month!

July has been proclaimed "Lake Appreciation Month" by the State of Minnesota. Donate to Itasca Waters today and become part of a community working to improve lakes in Itasca County for all to enjoy far into the future. Stay tuned for activities planned to celebrate our lakes and rivers!

[Donate to Itasca Waters Today!](#)



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