

Citizen Watershed Watch

1. If a person sees what they believe to be a water quality violation occurring, such as a plume of turbid water entering the lake, runoff of manure into a watercourse, or foam discharging into the lake, DEC Law Enforcement should be called at 315-427-7500 during regular business hours. During non-business hours, please call 1-844-DEC-ECOS. This number is staffed 24 hours/day and they will send out an Environmental Conservation Officer to investigate. A Notification of Owasco Watershed Concern should be completed and sent to NYSDEC with a copy to the watershed inspector.
2. If a person sees something that appears to be a bad practice that places the lake or its watercourse at risk, a complaint form should be completed and sent to the watershed inspector with copies to the Health Department, DEC, and/or Soil and Water.
3. If the water quality in a watercourse looks impaired it is a good idea to collect a water sample. The Health Department recommends that samples be collected for phosphorus, ammonia, and fecal coliform if possible.
 - a. For ammonia & phosphorus samples: Collect the sample in an appropriate bottle from the lab & return to lab as soon as possible. The sample must be held in a cooler with ice until it is delivered to the laboratory. The sample should be submitted as soon as possible but it can be held on ice over the weekend.
 - b. For fecal coliform samples: Collect sample in appropriate bottle from lab & return to lab within 1-3 hours of collection. The sample must be held in a cooler with ice until it is delivered to the laboratory. The maximum amount of time between when the sample is collected and the lab sets the sample up for the analysis is 6 hours. If it is longer than that, the analysis will not be considered accurate. Take into account the time the lab needs to set up the sample when delivering it.

To report a petroleum or chemical spill, call the NYS Spill Hotline at 1-800-457-7362.

