

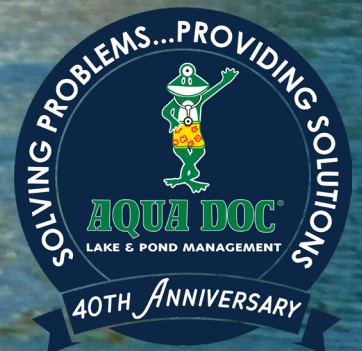


# PONDerings®

Official Newsletter | Issue 33

of **AQUA DOC®**

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# CATTAIL MANAGEMENT & REMOVAL

*Cattails and Phragmites are the most common emergent plants in the Midwest.*

*When it comes to eradicating this type of vegetation, timing is of the utmost importance.*

They have been known to take over lakes, ponds, and basins very quickly. Cattails can grow in as much as four feet of water and reach up to ten feet high, which can quickly ruin the beautiful aesthetics of your pond as well as negatively impact the entire ecosystem.

Systemic herbicides should be applied when the plant is finishing its flowering stage and beginning to set its seed head. Typically, this occurs in the late summer to early fall.

Cutting and removing the dead vegetation can be extremely messy and time consuming. Our aquatic specialists are trained in removing and disposing of cattails and other common aquatic vegetation.



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Cattail is a perennial plant which means that it lives more than two years in the wild.
- They use the wind's energy to spread their seeds.
- Cattails get their name from the fuzzy, elongated seed heads that remind some of the tails of cats.



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# AQUA DOC® Solving problems. Providing Solutions.

BEFORE MANAGEMENT

## Applying Aquatic Herbicides Yourself or Pay Someone?

**William E Lynch Jr., Ohio State Program Specialist, Aquatic Ecosystem Management (Retired)**

Pond owners can commonly apply aquatic herbicides themselves and need not pay a certified pesticide applicator to do it. That's not the case in many states, where the pond owner is required to hire a commercial applicator if he/she wishes to control nuisance aquatic plants.

Are there instances where it is wise to pay a licensed applicator to treat aquatic vegetation? Sure there is! Not all pond owners feel comfortable handling chemicals safely. Chemicals can be dangerous, and accidents do happen. These folks should consider paying a commercial applicator. Commercial applicators are trained to handle chemicals safely and must be re-certified every three years. This same advice applies to the application of terrestrial herbicides around the house.

Misidentification of problem plants can lead to additional costs because the wrong product was used or not enough of the correct product was used. A licensed aquatic herbicide applicator can almost always ID the plants correctly and determine what to use and how much.

Another instance a commercial applicator may be "worth their weight in gold" is it is difficult to calculate the volume of a pond. Poor math here can cost big dollars! Many pond owners treating their own pond grossly

AFTER MANAGEMENT

under estimate the pond's volume, and therefore under-apply the product chosen. No control is achieved. Commercial applicators are quite efficient at making those volume determinations.

In reality, the pond owner should ask themselves the following questions when considering whether or not to apply an herbicide themselves:

- Am I willing to take the time to read product labels, making sure to pay close attention to warnings, safety instructions, and restrictions?
- Am I able to correctly identify the plants causing the problem?
- Can I accurately calculate the amount of product required to do the job?
- Do I have the proper application and safety equipment to apply the herbicide?
- Do I really feel comfortable handling chemicals?

A "no" answer to any of these questions should cause the pond owner to consider a licensed applicator. Two "no" answers and the owner should pick up the phone and call a licensed, commercial applicator.

# AQUA DOC®

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# Phosphorus Pollution in your Pond: Sources, Impacts, Solutions

Dr. West Bishop, Algae Scientist and Water Quality Research Manager, SePro Corp

## So what's the big deal about phosphorus?

Perhaps you have observed the increase in regulatory standards being placed on phosphorus-containing products (detergents, fertilizers) or the implementation of best management practices in regard to phosphorus (buffer zones, rain gardens, and stormwater regulations). Is this attention on phosphorus pollution warranted? Well let's dive in and take a closer look at how phosphorus may impact your pond.

## Sources:

Phosphorus is a critical nutrient for all life, especially plants, animals, and humans. Common sources include animal waste, dead organic matter (such as leaves, grass, and even fish food), fertilizer runoff (agriculture, golf course, and lawn), and faulty septic systems. The concern is phosphorus typically ends up and accumulates in our precious freshwater resources. The internal cycling of historically accumulated phosphorus can also be significant, ongoing sources of phosphorus loading can have devastating impacts in your pond.

## Impacts:

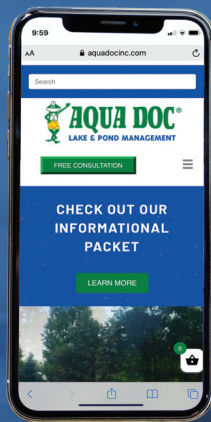
Once present in aquatic systems, phosphorus can go from a key nutrient in plant and animal health to the culprit for negative water quality and algae blooms. You see, phosphorus is the common limiting nutrient for algae in freshwater (especially the bad types) and the primary component governing eutrophication (aging ponds). Toxin and taste/odor producing cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) are particularly dependent on phosphorus levels to become dominant in your pond. This is because they are relatively poor competitors for phosphorus in the water column and

require large amounts of phosphorus for optimal growth. So how do you know if you have a phosphorus problem? Well, looking at your watershed and characterizing inputs is one way, also just looking at how much muck you have built up or the amount and type of plant and algal growth you have may also help. Is your pond water clear? Does it give off an odor at times? Have you experienced fish kills?

## Solutions:

We have seen where phosphorus comes from and the devastating impacts it can have on our water resources, now, what can we actually do if phosphorus is a problem? In most cases, anything that can be done to help mitigate excess phosphorus from reaching your pond is beneficial. Some commonly used best management practices include allowing native plants to create a buffer strip along the shore, stopping excess erosion, monitoring nearby septic systems, managing existing plants and algae, monitoring the watershed of your pond, and minimizing phosphorus in lawn fertilizers. For ponds where these common pond management strategies are not enough or where supplementation is needed, SePro scientists have recently developed a water quality restoration platform known as EutroSORB Technologies. This product line includes a number of phosphorus inactivation products designed to bind and reduce phosphorus concentrations within your pond safely and easily.

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