



**Mississippi Valley Conservation**

*State of the Lake  
Environment Report  
2006*

*Dalhousie Lake*



## **“THE RIBBON OF LIFE”**

### **Where the Land Meets the Water**

Water quality is affected by many things: erosion and runoff from clearing of shorelines, the use of artificial fertilizers and leachate from sewage disposal systems resulting in too many nutrients reaching the lake. Phosphorus is the key nutrient of concern, too many nutrients can cause weed and algae growth and threatens fish habitat by reducing oxygen levels.

The shallow waters and first 10 metres of shore land form a "Ribbon of Life" around our lakes. This ribbon - where the land meets the water - is where much of the lake life is born, raised and fed. Many landowners, unaware of the importance of this area, have cleared the shorelines of native vegetation and replaced it with lawns, non-native ornamental vegetation, retaining walls and boathouses. This has had a negative affect on fish and wildlife habitat and water quality. Natural vegetation retained or restored along the shoreline helps prevent erosion and improves water quality by binding nutrients before they can enter the lake.

Mississippi Valley Conservation has long recognized the recreational and aesthetic value of lakes within the watershed and is committed to maintaining and protecting water quality and fish habitat. Mississippi Valley Conservation has joined together with volunteer Lake Stewards throughout the watershed to take steps to protect and restore water quality by launching the *Watershed Watch* program in 1998. *Watershed Watch* is an environmental monitoring and awareness program. The objectives of the program are to collect reliable environmental data to document current water quality conditions and use the data as an essential educational tool to encourage residents to adopt sound stewardship practices aimed at preserving and protecting water quality. Together we will encourage and assist shoreline residents, both seasonal and permanent, to become personal stewards of their lake by taking an active role in restoring and enhancing their shoreline to maintain water quality and a healthy lake environment.

Recreational water quality is generally expressed in terms of how clear the water appears. Water clarity is influenced by the amount of phytoplankton or microscopic algae present in the water; **chlorophyll a** is the green pigment in the phytoplankton. Water clarity is measured with a **Secchi Disc**, a 20 cm black and white disk attached to a measured line and lowered into the lake until it is no longer visible. The amount of nutrients entering the lake, in particular **phosphorus**, influences the amount of algae growing in the lake. Water clarity decreases with elevated concentrations of algae and therefore Secchi disc values are less. After the spring warming period there is a continuous supply of algae in the surface waters of the lake to the deep water areas where it decomposes and uses up the natural supply of oxygen. In severe circumstances this may eliminate habitat for fish species which require the cold, deep water portions to survive. Through *Watershed Watch* forty-two base lakes in the watershed will be monitored for these key water quality indicators; **total phosphorus, chlorophyll a, dissolved oxygen and temperature profiles and water clarity.**

# DALHOUSIE LAKE

Dalhousie Lake is a warm water lake located in the Township of Lanark Highlands. Situated near the edge of the Canadian Shield, at last count in 1993, there were approximately 184 cottages, 8 houses and 4 (73) resorts on the lake.

## Dalhousie Lake Facts

**Elevation:** approx. 156 m above sea level

**Surface Area:** 1491 Acres

**Perimeter:** 13.5 Km

**Length:** 5 Km

**Width:** 1 Km

**Deepest Point:** 13.4m (main basin)

**Fisheries Include:** Smallmouth Bass

Pickerel

Northern Pike



Members of the Lake Association have volunteered their time to provide water quality testing through the Ministry of Environment (MOE) Self Help Program since 1975. This data is extremely valuable, and provides a general picture of water quality conditions over the past 26 years. Comprehensive testing in 2001 and 2006 through Mississippi Valley Conservation's (MVC) *Watershed Watch Program* provides for a comparison between water quality conditions as they exist now, to results obtained 26 years ago through the MOE Recreational Lakes Program.

In general the water quality in Dalhousie Lake is good. There is one sampling station at the deepest point as indicated on the map included in this report. This station was sampled eight times in 2006 thanks to a grant by OMYA Canada Inc. Graphs will follow that show water

clarity, as measured by Secchi Disc. The mean for 2006 is 4.1 metres indicating that Dalhousie Lake is a moderately enriched (some nutrients) or mesotrophic lake.

Directly related to water clarity is the amount of nutrients, in particular phosphorus, entering the lake. The Provincial Water Quality Objective for Total Phosphorus for Dalhousie Lake is 20 micrograms/litre (*ug/L*). The mean for euphotic zone (penetration of light) for 2006 is 7.6 *ug/L* indicating an unenriched (few nutrients) or oligotrophic lake. The mean for the sample taken one metre off the bottom is 15.6*ug/L*, indicating a moderately enriched, or mesotrophic lake.

Chlorophyll a is a measure of the algal density in the lake. The average chlorophyll a densities for the sampling station in 2006 is 2.9 micrograms/litre indicating, a moderate algal density for Dalhousie Lake in 2006.

It is not all good news, plants and animals are a direct reflection of their environment. The most critical time of year for conducting dissolved oxygen and temperature profiles is after August 31. Profiles are generally conducted at this time of year and at the deepest point in the lake. Aquatic vegetation and algae that has grown over the summer, has died off and settled on the bottom, using the available oxygen necessary to sustain aquatic life in the lower portion of the lake or the hypolimnion.

The dissolved oxygen and temperature data, measured at the deepest point in the main basin, indicate oxygen concentrations in the deep water portion are poor by mid September. Warm water fish species, such as pickerel and bass, are squeezed into the upper six metres of the lake by late summer. However, profiles taken in October do show improvements, warm water fish species have use of the enter water column. Residents and users of Dalhousie Lake can still not afford to be complacent. Every effort should be made to reduce nutrient loading into the lake from land use activities.

Dalhousie Lake was also tested for invasive species in 2006, in particular, for zebra mussels and spiny water flea, in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Dalhousie Lake did not have spiny water flea present in the samples collected however; zebra mussel veligers (larvae) were detected. Residents and property owners need to ensure that all access points to the lake have posted signs indicating the presence of zebra mussels and the precautions they can take to avoid the spread of invasive species to other lakes.

There are helpful tips throughout this report to help reduce your impact on Dalhousie Lake. Additional water quality data, current and historic, is available for Dalhousie Lake and many other lakes in the Mississippi Valley watershed. Contact MVC for more information on how you can become a good lake steward for your lake. We all have a responsibility to preserve this precious natural resource for future generations.



## How Does Dalhousie Lake Measure Up?

### 1975 – 2006 WATER QUALITY RESULTS – MAIN BASIN

Sample Year Mean	Secchi Disc Depth (Metres)	Total Phosphorus Euphotic Zone (Micrograms/litre)	Total Phosphorus 1 Metre off Bottom (Micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll <u>a</u> Composite (Micrograms/litre)
**1975	3.6	20.2	54.0	4.6
1976	3.9			3.1
1977	4.1			2.2
1978	4.6			1.9
1979	3.5			2.6
**1980	4.4	9.0	40.0	2.8
1981	5.1			1.4
1982	4.6			1.8
1983	4.8			0.8
1986	2.8			3.2
1987	3.4			2.8
1990	3.4			4.6
1991	3.8			1.8
1992	3.8			1.7
1993	4.4			1.3
1994	4.1			2.7
1995	3.5			2.1
2001	3.8	10.1	75.3	2.9
*2006	4.1	7.6	15.6	2.9
N	19	4	4	19
Mean	4.0	11.7	46.2	2.5
Standard Deviation	0.570831	5.7418783	25.049601	0.999591

\*Mean based on less than 6 measurements    \*\*Includes Recreational Lakes Program Data  
Chlorophyll a data prior to 1985 has been adjusted to reflect new lab procedures  
in filtering resulting in an increase in chl.a concentrations by 35%

### **FIVE EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY**

1. Build at least 30 metres away from the shoreline.
2. Keep your lot well treed and preserve or replant native vegetation along the shoreline.
3. Pump out your septic tank every three to five years.
4. Reduce water use and use phosphate free soaps and detergents.
5. Keep the size of your lawn to a minimum; do not use fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides.



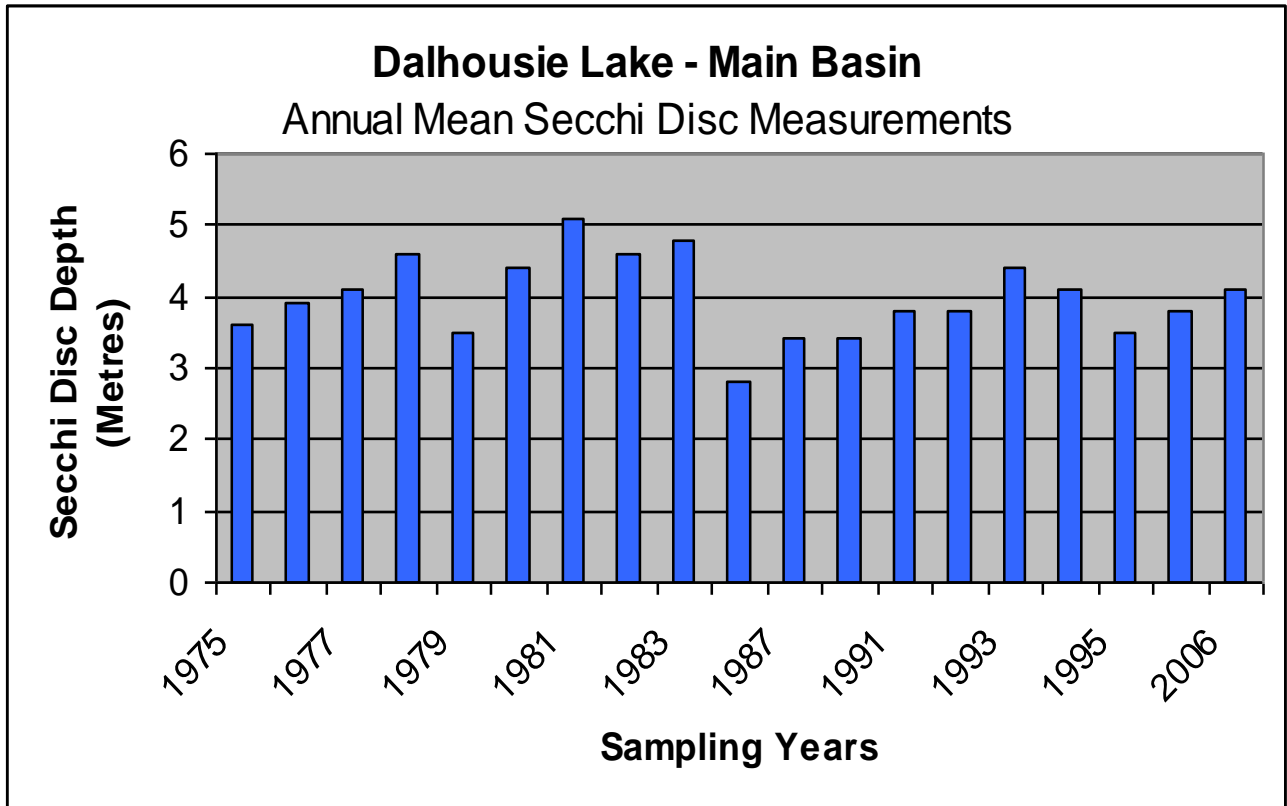
For more information on lakes in the  
Mississippi Valley Watershed, visit MVC  
online at

**[www.mvc.on.c](http://www.mvc.on.c)**

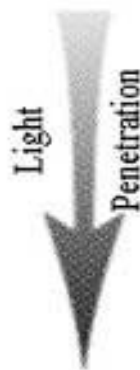


The higher the Secchi Disc measurement, the clearer your lake is!

INTERPRETING YOUR SECCHI DISC RESULTS	
Secchi Reading	Lake Nutrient Status
Over 5 metres	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
3.0 to 4.9 metres	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
Less than 2.9 metres	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



Clear lake having a small algal population results in a deep SDT reading, high clarity



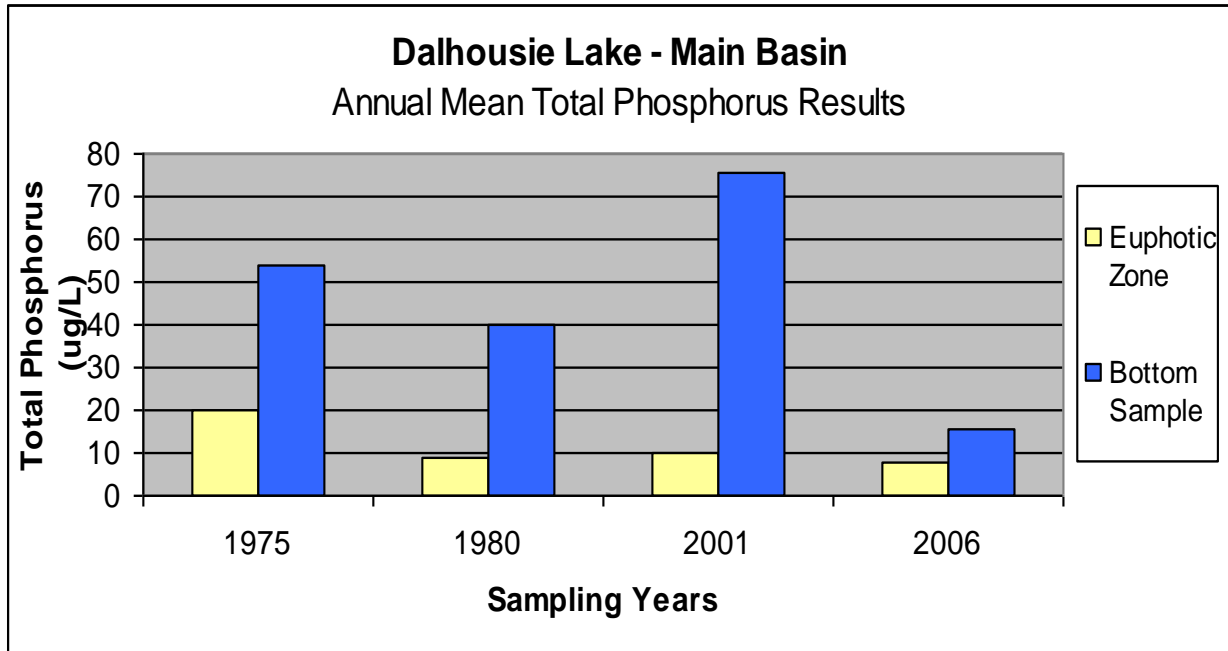
Turbid lake having large algal population results in shallow SDT reading, low clarity

\* Image courtesy of the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program.

SDT (Secchi Disc Transparency)

The lower the phosphorus reading, the clearer your lake is!

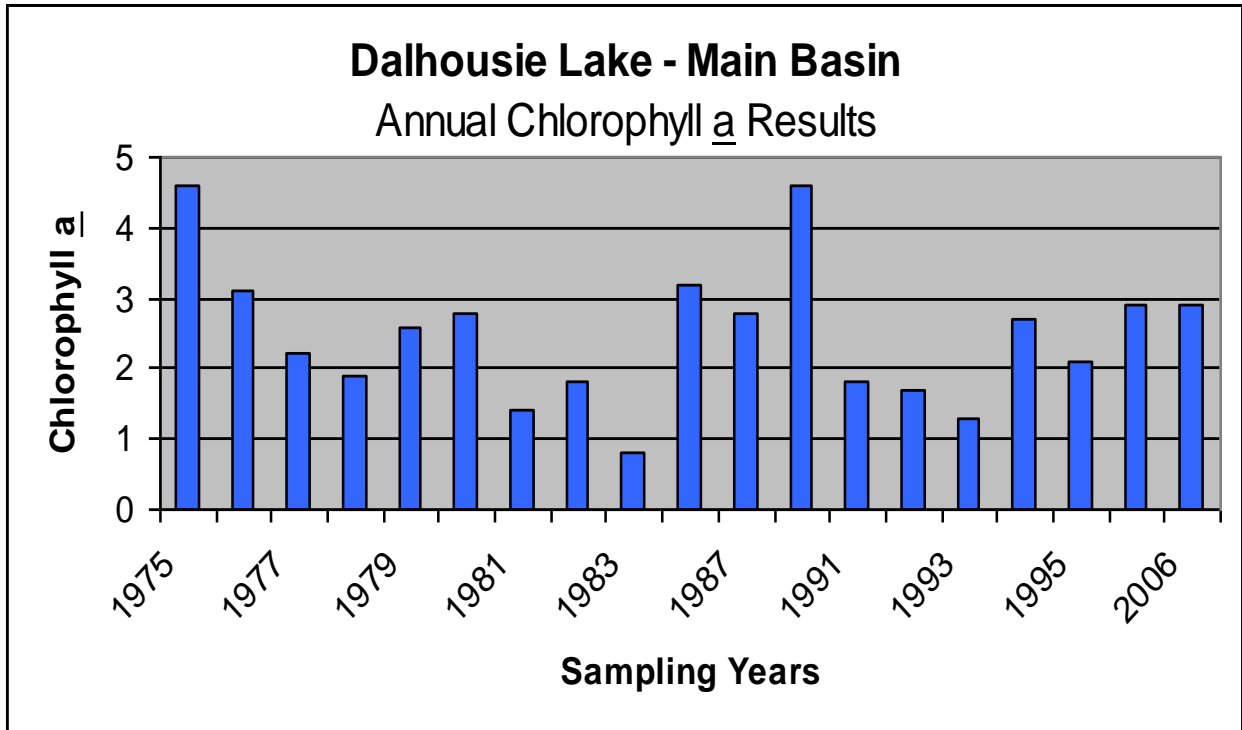
Nutrient Loading and How to Interpret the Water Quality Result :	
If the Total Phosphorus Reading is... Your Lake is...	
10 ug/L or less	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
11 to 20 ug/L	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
21 ug/L or more	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



<b>LOW PHOSPHORUS LIFESTYLE</b>	<b>Amount of Phosphorus (grams)</b>	<b>HIGH PHOSPHORUS LIFESTYLE</b>	<b>Amount of Phosphorus (grams)</b>
Human waste	535	Human waste	535
No dishwasher	0	Dishwasher using powdered detergent once per day	650
No fertilizer	0	Lawn fertilized once/year	1960
Trees not cut down	20	Lot cleared of trees	30
Uses phosphate-free products	20	Uses products with phosphate	180
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>575 grams</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3355 grams</b>

The lower the Chlorophyll a density, the clearer your lake is!

Nutrient Loading and How to Interpret the Water Quality Result :	
If the Chlorophyll <u>a</u> density is...	Your Lake is...
Up to 2 ug/L (low algal density)	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
2 – 4 ug/L (moderate algal density)	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
More than 4 ug/L (high algal density)	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



**How to protect or restore a shoreline depends on the conditions of the site and the energy and resources of the owner.**

There are four main strategies to choose from:

1.) **PRESERVATION** – When purchasing lakefront property, a natural shoreline is retained and access to the lake is designed to avoid shoreline damage.

3.) **ENHANCEMENT** – Native species are planted non-native species are removed.

2.) **NATURALIZATION** – Degraded shorelines are left alone to return to their natural state.

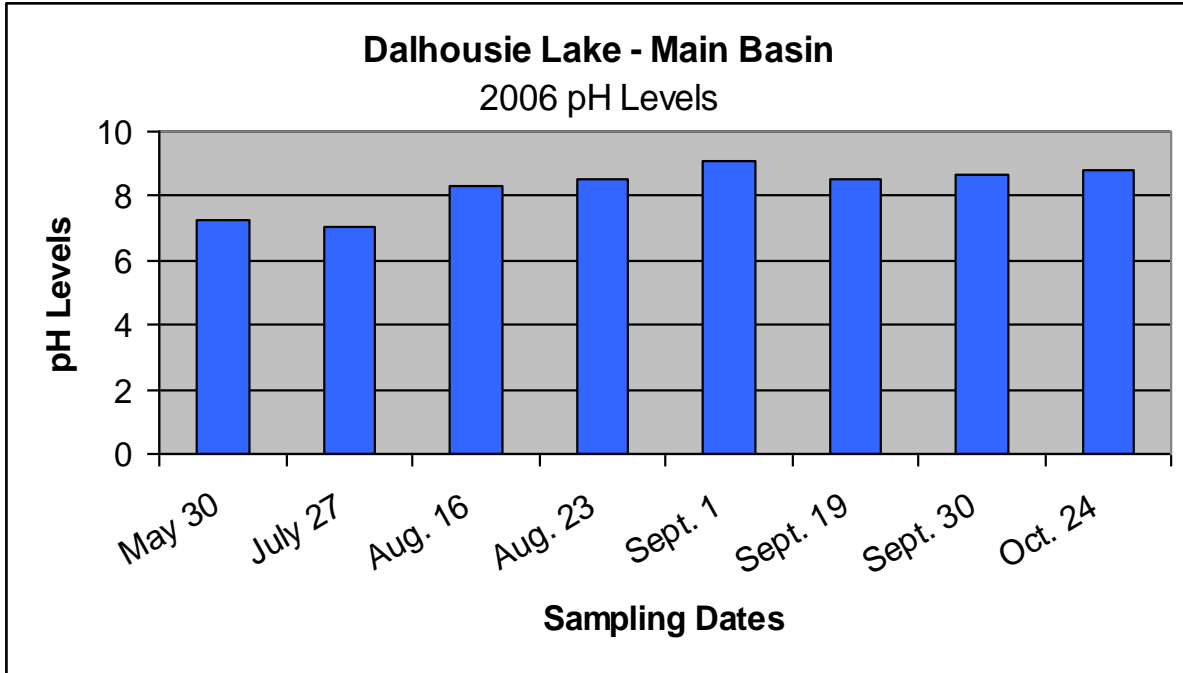
4.) **RESTORATION** – Cleared areas are planted with native species.





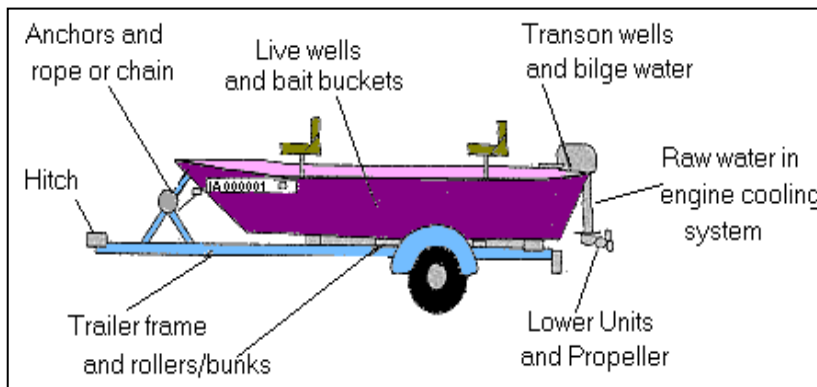
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Lakes with pH levels of 7.3 or higher are vulnerable to zebra mussel invasives!



## MVC and OFAH need your help to Stop the Invasion!

Check & clean your boat every time you change water bodies



Working with Lake Associations, we hope to improve signage at public launching areas to identify lakes where zebra mussels and spiny water fleas are already present. We hope to focus on an ambitious educational campaign to help reduce their spread to lakes where they are not yet present.

**For more information call MVC at (613)259-2421, the Invading Species Hotline 1-800-563-7711.**

**DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN**

**DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE**

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: May 30, 2006

Depth: 10 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	20.8	11.0	117	Epilimnion
1.0	19.9	12.1	127	
2.0	18.6	12.4	127	Thermocline
3.0	17.5	13.3	135	
4.0	16.4	13.4	133	
5.0	15.9	13.3	130	Hypolimnion
6.0	15.3	13.0	125	
7.0	14.8	12.8	121	
8.0	14.2	12.4	116	
9.0	13.8	11.9	110	
10.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**

**DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN**

**DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE**

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: July 27, 2006

Depth: 13 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	24.5	10.0	114	Epilimnion
1.0	24.5	9.9	112	
2.0	24.5	9.8	112	
3.0	24.5	9.8	112	
4.0	24.4	9.7	111	
5.0	24.4	9.7	111	
6.0	21.4	3.8	39	Thermocline - 1
7.0	17.9	1.2	11	
8.0	16.0	0.9	8	
9.0	15.4	0.6	5	Thermocline - 2
10.0	12.8	0.4	4	
11.0	11.5	0.4	4	
12.0	11.0	0.4	4	Hypolimnion
13.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**

**DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN**

**DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE**

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: August 16, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.3	9.0	99	Epilimnion
1.0	22.0	8.6	94	
2.0	22.1	8.8	96	
3.0	22.1	8.4	92	
4.0	22.1	8.5	93	
5.0	22.0	8.3	91	
6.0	22.0	8.4	92	
7.0	22.0	8.2	90	
8.0	17.0	0.4	4	Thermocline
9.0	14.9	0.2	2	Hypolimnion
10.0	14.4	0.2	2	
11.0	13.5	0.2	2	
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN**

**DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE**

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: August 23, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 7 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.7	11.0	122	Epilimnion
1.0	22.7	9.1	100	
2.0	22.7	8.9	98	
3.0	22.6	9.0	100	
4.0	22.5	8.9	98	
5.0	22.4	8.9	98	
6.0	22.3	8.9	98	
7.0	21.6	8.0	87	
8.0	19.0	7.1	73	Thermocline
9.0	15.5	2.3	20	
10.0	12.8	1.5	13	
11.0	11.8	1.2	9	Hypolimnion
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**

## DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN

### DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: September 1, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	20.8	10.0	105	Epilimnion
1.0	20.8	9.1	96	
2.0	20.8	9.0	96	
3.0	20.7	9.0	96	
4.0	20.7	8.9	95	
5.0	20.7	8.9	95	
6.0	19.9	7.0	73	
7.0	18.5	1.3	12	
8.0	15.3	1.0	9	Thermocline
9.0	13.2	1.0	9	
10.0	11.7	0.7	5	
11.0	9.9	0.7	5	
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

## DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN

### DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: September 19, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	20.8	10.0	105	Epilimnion
1.0	20.8	9.1	96	
2.0	20.8	9.0	96	
3.0	20.7	9.0	96	
4.0	20.7	8.9	95	
5.0	20.7	8.9	95	
6.0	19.9	7.0	73	
7.0	18.5	1.3	12	
8.0	15.3	1.0	9	Thermocline
9.0	13.2	1.0	9	
10.0	11.7	0.7	5	
11.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**

## DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN

### DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: September 30, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 10.0 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	15.5	9.7	96	Epilimnion
1.0	15.5	10.1	100	
2.0	15.4	10.1	100	
3.0	15.4	10.2	101	
4.0	15.3	10.2	101	
5.0	15.3	10.2	101	
6.0	15.2	10.2	101	
7.0	15.2	10.1	100	
8.0	15.1	10.0	99	
9.0	15.1	9.9	98	
10.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**

## DALHOUSIE LAKE – MAIN BASIN

### DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 19-3430-734-01 MVC Station # 06-10

Date: October 24, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	9.4	11.0	94	Epilimnion
1.0	9.4	11.0	94	
2.0	9.4	11.2	96	
3.0	9.4	11.2	96	
4.0	9.4	11.2	96	
5.0	9.4	11.2	96	
6.0	9.4	11.2	96	
7.0	9.3	11.2	96	
8.0	9.2	11.2	96	
9.0	9.2	11.1	95	
10.0	9.2	11.1	95	
11.0	9.1	11.1	95	
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

**Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius**



## Mississippi Valley Conservation

*The Watershed Watch Program was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Ministry of Environment, Lake Associations, area Stewardship Councils, the Lake Stewardship Network and concerned citizens. A special thanks to **OMYA CANADA INC.** for adopting Dalhousie Lake with a generous donation.*

**For more information regarding *Watershed Watch* or for advice on how you can help protect and enhance your lake environment, contact Susan Lee, Watershed Monitoring Supervisor at Mississippi Valley Conservation. (613) 259-2421 or [slee@mvc.on.ca](mailto:slee@mvc.on.ca)**

**OMYA**