

## **New Year Resolutions for the Lake's Sake**

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New Year resolutions take many shapes, from declarations to better ourselves to enacting behavior changes by doing something new or putting an end to an old habit. Resolutions made in January may turn out to be promises that are broken in a matter of months, or they may be the beginning of long-term changes that improve our lives, families, and communities. If you are a resident of the Skaneateles Lake Watershed, consider making and upholding a few resolutions that will help protect local water resources. The need to protect the lake and the quality of its water is a conviction that is widely heard and held. But whose responsibility is it to protect the lake? The reality is that it is up to everyone in the watershed to turn words and thoughts into action. If you agree that a clean and healthy lake is important for drinking water, fishing, boating, swimming, and all of the other ways Skaneateles Lake benefits local communities and people, then challenge yourself to make a few New Year's resolutions that will help protect the lake and the water you live with everyday.

- ◆ **Resolve to learn more about the lake:** read a book, check out the Skaneateles Lake Web Site or attend a lecture or workshop.  
([www.cce.cornell.edu/onondaga/Skaneateles/skanindex.htm](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/onondaga/Skaneateles/skanindex.htm))
- ◆ **Resolve to use lake-friendly actions at home:** don't dump automobile fluids or household hazardous wastes on the ground, in streams or down stormdrains/ditches.
- ◆ **Resolve to maintain a lake-friendly yard and garden:** have your soil tested before choosing or applying lawn fertilizers, start a compost bin, or catch rain to water your grass and plants.
- ◆ **Resolve to volunteer for a cause that benefits the lake and water quality:** adopt-a-shoreline to report invasive plants, monitor a local stream or volunteer to help plant and care for trees.
- ◆ **Resolve to stop soil erosion:** plant or mulch exposed soils, stabilize your streambank or shoreline property, & use proper erosion-prevention structures on construction sites.
- ◆ **Resolve to reduce stormwater runoff:** minimize the use of impermeable surfaces like concrete and black top, plant a shoreline buffer of vegetation, designate a "No-Mow" zone along streambanks, or install a rain barrel or rain garden to capture rainwater from your roof.
- ◆ **Resolve to teach children the value of environmental stewardship:** participate in a stream walk or lake event, encourage a youth or scout group to get involved with a water-related service project, & talk to children about why water is a resource that is shared by everyone.
- ◆ **Resolve to make your household water efficient, healthy and safe:** Attend a workshop on drinking water or septic systems, install water conserving faucets and appliances, test your well water regularly, or have your septic system pumped.