

CONESUS LAKE FISH KILL CONTINGENCY PLAN

RESIDENT & LAKE USER ACTION PLAN

What is the purpose of this *Fish Kill Contingency Plan*?

Livingston County has developed an emergency plan in case of a potential major fish kill incident on Conesus Lake. This plan identifies essential actions that should be taken to assure that such an incident is dealt with in an effective and timely manner so the incident will not create a negative impact on the health and safety of lake residents, lake users, or residents who rely on Conesus Lake for their drinking water. The *Fish Kill Contingency Plan* is an annex to the *Livingston County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*.

What is a “reportable” fish kill in Conesus Lake?

The following thresholds refer to the number of dead or moribund (still alive, but distressed and near death) fish found in a single general area on the lake in one day:

Non-Reportable:

Less than 5 game fish or carp (e.g., bass, walleye, pike, or fish greater than about 8” in length)

Less than 20 pan fish (e.g., rock bass, sunfish, perch, or fish less than about 8” in length)

Less than 100 bait fish (e.g., alewives, or fish less than about 4” in length)

Reportable:

5 or more game fish or carp

20 or more pan fish

100 or more bait fish

What should I do if I discover a fish kill in Conesus Lake?

Non-reportable:

The discovery of dead or moribund fish in/around Conesus Lake is a natural part of life on the lake. As always, the responsibility for cleaning up and properly disposing of a “non-reportable” fish kill remains with lake residents and lake users. The appropriate methods of disposal are through private garbage pickup, private composting, and/or local recycling centers.

Reportable:

Any person discovering a reportable fish kill, as defined above, should report their observation to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“NYSDEC”) as soon as possible. Reporting procedures and contact telephone numbers can be found below. The report should include the date and time the fish kill was first observed, the location of the kill within the lake, the condition of the dead or dying fish, the species of fish involved if known, and the approximate number of fish involved.

What will happen when a reportable fish kill is discovered?

Notification:

When a fish kill is reported to the NYSDEC, the NYSDEC will notify the Livingston County Sheriff’s Office. The Sheriff’s Office will then contact representatives from the Livingston County Emergency Management Office, the Livingston County Department of Health, and the Conesus Lake Association.

Collection:

In order for NYSDEC to diagnose a disease related fish kill, a sample of moribund or recently dead specimens is needed. NYSDEC cannot use fish showing any signs of decomposition. NYSDEC staff will normally collect the required fish.

Collection (continued):

If the person reporting the fish kill is asked to collect fish samples, the following collection procedure should be strictly followed:

1. Collect only moribund or recently dead fish. Depending on the species and the number of dead fish observed, 5 to 20 fish should be collected.
2. Use a fish landing net to capture moribund fish and always wear rubber or latex gloves when handling the fish. Use a landing net, pitchfork or other device to handle dead fish. Never use bare hands.
3. Do not allow dead fish to come into direct skin contact. Wear the appropriate protective clothing, gloves and eye protection.
4. Place each fish in an individual plastic bag and place all samples in a refrigerator or cooler with ice. Do not freeze the samples.
5. Write down your observations above about the quantity of dead fish, record the location of the fish kill, and place these notes with the fish.
6. Wait for NYSDEC staff to collect the samples or, if requested, deliver the fish samples to the NYSDEC office at 6274 East Avon-Lima Road or to another designated person. The Region 8 office of NYSDEC is located approximately 0.75 mile east of the intersection of Bronson Hill Rd and Routes 5&20, between I-390 and Lima.

What will the authorities do once they have been contacted?

The *Fish Kill Contingency Plan* assigns responsibilities for specific response efforts to various agencies and organizations that have been identified as part of a unified command to respond to any reportable fish kill. The unified command, including the Livingston County Emergency Management Office, the Livingston County Department of Health, the NYSDEC, the Conesus Lake Association and the Conesus Lake Watershed Manager, will coordinate all recovery activities. Once a fish kill has been reported to NYSDEC, the response elements of the Plan will ensure that the appropriate notification, collection, disposal and recovery actions are taken.

Who do I contact if I discover a reportable fish kill?

The **ONLY** contact that any person discovering a reportable fish kill in Conesus Lake needs to make is the first reachable telephone number (the caller should speak with a person and not leave a message) from the following list:

- Fish Kill Contact List – call these numbers in the order they are listed -

NYSDEC Region 8 Bureau of Fisheries

8:30am – 4:45pm, Monday through Friday 585-226-5343

NYSDEC Division of Law Enforcement Dispatcher Hotline

After Business Hours 877-457-5680 or 844-457-5680

Livingston County Sheriff’s Department

Alternate 24/7 Contact 911