

## POND MANAGEMENT - CHANGES ARE COMING

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Perhaps the most common pond and inland lake management problem in Michigan is an overabundance of aquatic plants. Usually, the first question asked by pond and lake property owners experiencing an aquatic plant problem is "What chemical can I use to kill the algae (or weeds)?" The answer to this question, unfortunately, is not as simple as it may seem. If adopted, rules changes proposed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources will restrict the way available chemicals can be used where permits are required. The proposed changes are:

1. Only certified applicators will be permitted to apply aquatic herbicides which have use restrictions.
2. Application of aquatic herbicides near lake and pond outlets will be restricted to a minimum distance based on the level of risk or ground water contamination (low risk = chemicals which bind to soil or high risk = chemicals which do not bind to soil) and on the size of the lake or pond.

Other potential alternatives to chemical aquatic plant control include mechanical control, biological control and watershed management. Each alternative has its own set of advantages and limitations.