



Keep It Clean Campaign Comes to Mille Lacs Lake

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Keep It Clean is a grassroots effort to address the growing problem of garbage and human waste left on the ice by anglers and other visitors during ice fishing season. It began at Lake of the Woods a few years ago and now includes Upper Red Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, Lake Vermilion, and other ice fishing destinations.

In a recent Keep It Clean video, outdoorsman and broadcaster Ron Schara introduced the issue this way:

"Fishing is good for the soul as winter anglers seek the peace and solitude of a frozen landscape. But we have an ice fishing problem, a nasty problem, a pollution problem and, frankly, an embarrassing problem. Garbage and human waste are being left on Minnesota lakes during ice fishing season, and in the spring this garbage and waste infiltrates our waters, sinking to the bottom or washing up on shore." You can watch the full video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zwa4mSuK5m8>



Keep It Clean recommends these five steps towards keeping our ice pollution-free:

1. Make a plan for trash and waste removal before you arrive.

Whether you access the ice from a public or private entrance, plan to take off of the ice what you take on to it. Many access points and resorts offer garbage collection services. If your site doesn't, make a plan to transport it home for disposal.

2. Use colored garbage bags.

In snowy conditions, white trash bags can be difficult to see. Brightly colored bags or black bags are easier to spot making it less likely trash will inadvertently be left behind.

3. Keep garbage and human waste off the ice.

Store it in your vehicle, trailer or fish house. Make sure it's secure before traveling so that it doesn't blow out of truck beds or off trailers and sleds.

4. Check for trash before departing.

Make sure that you have picked up any garbage in your area. And if you notice someone else has left something behind, please take a moment to pick it up and bring it with you.

5. Allow time and bring the tools you need to move or remove your fish house.

Take support blocks, insulation, landscaping fabric, wood and other materials with you and properly dispose of them.

Visit the Keep It Clean Website

Keep It Clean's website — KeepItCleanMN.org—makes it easy to locate information about the campaign and to join the effort. The site includes an online membership form (there's no charge to join) and an online store that offers Keep It Clean-branded banners, posters, table tents, bar coasters and stickers for members to use in their own campaigns. It also provides information about running a geofencing educational ad campaign.



Visit MilleLacsWatershed.org to learn more about supporting a healthy lake environment.