

With a **greenbelt**,  
it's easy being green

A greenbelt is a buffer of native vegetation between the water's edge and your lawn. For best results, greenbelts should cover 75% of shoreline frontage and 20 feet wide for maximum water quality benefits.

A greenbelt will help:

- Stabilize soil and slow runoff.
- Filter nutrients, sediments, and other pollution.
- Provide valuable wildlife habitat.

*One quick and easy way to get a shoreline greenbelt started is to create a "no-mow" zone.*

*Native grasses and wildflowers are some of the first plants to appear.*

### Did you know... about Permits?

Many activities occurring near a lake, stream, wetland or Great Lake require a permit from the local, state, and/or federal level. Check with these agencies before beginning any work.

### Infiltrate your lakeshore

Impervious surfaces, like concrete and asphalt, do not allow rainwater to soak into the ground below. Building a new home often results in an increase of impervious surfaces on your shoreline property, such as roofs, driveways, patios, and walkways. Reducing the total area of impervious surface allows rainwater to infiltrate the soil instead of picking up contaminants across the landscape and flowing into a nearby lake or stream. This also helps replenish groundwater and drinking water. Erosion can be minimized or prevented by improving rainwater absorption.

Types of pervious hardscape surfaces:

- Porous asphalt or concrete.
- Permeable pavers.
- Crushed stone on driveways and walkways.

### Did you know?

Installation of **native landscaping costs 48% less** than traditional landscaping. In a traditional landscape, the frequency and intensity of mowing, turf maintenance, weeding, and early plant replacement initially keeps costs in the same general area as a new native landscape. However, after about 5 years the stresses of herbicide application, shrub and tree mortality, and other aging syndromes of a landscape that does not renew itself results in greater maintenance costs than for sustainable or native landscapes. (Source: Conservation Design Forum, Inc., Elmhurst, IL)



Want to know more about best management practices for lakefront properties? The Michigan Shoreland Stewards program will show you how. Visit [www.mishorelandstewards.org](http://www.mishorelandstewards.org)

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# Sensible Shoreline Development

A Guide for Shoreline Homeowners

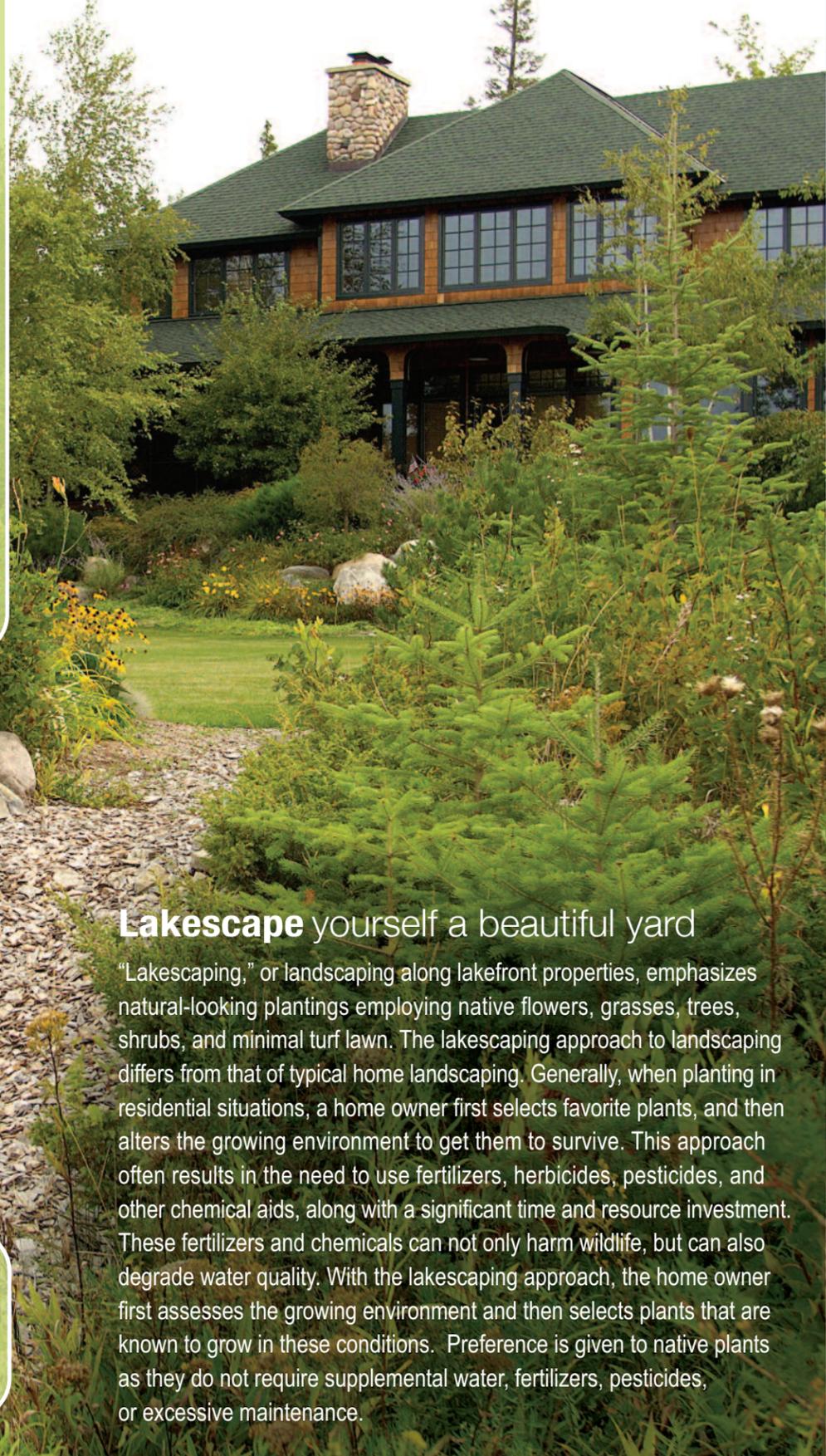


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Northern Michigan's water resources add immeasurably to our quality of life. Protecting water resources is a must for those living and working along shorelines. Certain shoreline practices can reduce erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and protect water quality. Thinking about the footprint you'll leave when you build or modify your home will go a long way in preserving water resources for future generations.

*What footprint will you leave?*

Whether you're building a new home or modifying your existing developed property, the information in this brochure will help you make environmentally sound decisions that can help preserve the character and quality of the land and water that surround you.



**Lakescape** yourself a beautiful yard

"Lakescaping," or landscaping along lakefront properties, emphasizes natural-looking plantings employing native flowers, grasses, trees, shrubs, and minimal turf lawn. The lakescaping approach to landscaping differs from that of typical home landscaping. Generally, when planting in residential situations, a home owner first selects favorite plants, and then alters the growing environment to get them to survive. This approach often results in the need to use fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and other chemical aids, along with a significant time and resource investment. These fertilizers and chemicals can not only harm wildlife, but can also degrade water quality. With the lakescaping approach, the home owner first assesses the growing environment and then selects plants that are known to grow in these conditions. Preference is given to native plants as they do not require supplemental water, fertilizers, pesticides, or excessive maintenance.

**Did you know?**

Insufficient shade along a shoreline contributes to rising water temperatures, which affects fish habitat and creates conditions for unwelcome algae growth.

**Setback**  
and enjoy the view

The building setback is the distance required between structures and sensitive shoreline resources.

- The most effective way to relieve construction pressure on aquatic and riparian habitat.
- Recommended 100 ft. minimum.
- Local ordinances may apply.

Go **native**  
and **natural!**

Native plants are plants that grow naturally in your region and are best suited for the environmental conditions on your lakeshore property. They have the perfect balance of form and function:

- Deep, fibrous roots help keep the soil in place, encourage infiltration, and readily absorb nutrients.
- Their variety of form, color, height, and environmental preferences will beautify your property.
- Once established, they require little maintenance.

Show your **softer shoreline**

Bioengineering is an effective alternative to seawalls or oversized rip rap often-times used to control shoreline erosion. Bioengineering erosion control uses smaller fieldstone, flexible coconut fiber bundles, and plantings to restore the natural shoreline while also preventing further erosion.

- Protects water quality.
- Provides more shoreline habitat.
- More natural in appearance than vertical seawalls.



**Did you know?**  
Excess fertilizers, pesticides, and other materials found around shoreline properties wash into a lake after a heavy rain. These substances can alter the water's chemical and biological characteristics, creating unhealthy conditions. If you decide fertilizing is necessary, be sure to use a phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer. The nutrient code on the fertilizer bag should have a "zero" as the middle number to indicate it is phosphorus-free.

Shoreline properties featured in this brochure were photographed on Lake Charlevoix.



Native Beauty...

The plants on the left are all native to this area and are beautiful when incorporated into lakeshore landscaping projects. For a complete list of Northern Michigan's native plants and where to purchase them locally, please contact Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council.