



## Pond Maintenance at Ide's Grove West Park

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Question #1: Does the Park District take active measures to treat algae in District owned/managed ponds?**

**Answer:** The District owns/manages numerous ponds throughout the community only three of which the District takes active measures to manage algae. We evaluate the ponds on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate course of action including chemical treatment. A combination of aerators and regular chemical treatments are used at Lake Harriet and Ide's Grove East Park, and beginning this spring chemical treatments have been implemented at Ide's Grove West Park.

**Question #2: Is the pond scum (algae) a health hazard?**

**Answer:** While some species of algae may pose a health risk, the green filamentous algae present at Ide's Grove West Park is harmless and does not produce toxins; however, the algae is unsightly and may present a nuisance for recreational fishing or boating.

**Question #3: Why are parts of the pond dry and weedy?**

**Answer:** The site design implemented with the development of the Timbers Edge Subdivision incorporated a large wetland on the east end of the original open-water pond. The wetland design features some areas of intermittent standing water the size of which is subject to change seasonally. The wetland and pond buffers (native plantings along the pond banks) have a stormwater management function. These landscape areas provide layers of natural filtration reducing the volume of pollutants and nutrients entering the pond.

**Question #4: Why does the District not mow to the water's edge?**

**Answer:** Mowing and maintaining turf to the water's edge significantly increases the risk of erosion as a result of turf grass's shallow root systems. Additionally, high slopes often found along pond edges require specialized equipment to mow safely. Pond and wetland buffer plantings, comprised of a mix of deep-rooted native plants, help to stabilize pond banks limiting erosion and providing layers of natural filtration reducing the volume of pollutants and nutrients entering the pond. These important stormwater management functions are why their inclusion in the site developments, like Ide's Grove West Park, are often a requirement of the permitting process.

**Question #5: If the Park District is unwilling to mow to the water's edge, why can't residents maintain these areas behind their homes?**

**Answer:** In most cases, the District owns a strip of land beyond the edge of the pond and manages those areas in accordance with District maintenance and operations practices for the specific site condition. At Ide's Grove West Park, the distance between the water's edge and the rear residential property lines is between 25-30 feet on average. This means a resident would be encroaching onto District property by that full distance to mow to the pond edge. Encroachments of any kind are prohibited on District property and are subject to fine (examples included but are not limited to building structures, plantings, mowing, dumping of spoils or yard waste, removal of plantings or other features, etc.). Additionally, the pond and wetland buffer plantings, comprised of a mix of deep-rooted native plants, help to stabilize pond banks limiting erosion and providing layers of natural filtration reducing the volume of pollutants and nutrients entering the pond.

**Questions #6: Is fishing allowed in all areas of the pond at Ide's Grove West Park? I don't like people littering and being in my backyard.**

**Answer:** Yes, Ide's Grove West is a public park and recreational fishing is allowed in all areas of the pond; however, littering is not only prohibited but is illegal. At Ide's Grove West Park, the distance between the water's edge and the rear residential property lines is between 25-30 feet on average. These are public spaces available for recreational purposes.