

NEW BACTERIA MONITORING PROTOCOL

Due to the occurrence of the June 2006 Flood and to the abandonment of the Town of Caroga's lake bacteria monitoring program, the Board of Director's voted on a new protocol for the monitoring of bacteria on Canada Lake, West Lake and Green Lake during their August 2006 meeting.

Prior to June 2006, CLPA volunteers would collect samples at random locations along the lakes' shoreline once per season to be tested for the presence of coliform bacteria colonies, using the *ColiCount* method, an indicator of potential septic system problems. The Town of Caroga supplied the sample kits, as well as the equipment and analyses, and retained the results.

The newly adopted protocol is summarized as follows:

- 1) - Water testing will be conducted twice per season to test the presence of fecal bacteria along the shoreline (approx. 50 sites per season).
 - CLPA will order all sample kits, and will conduct analyses using the equipment donated to CLPA by the Town of Caroga.
 - Site locations will be selected based on a number of factors, including owner's request, historical test results, historical frequency, and visual observations.
- 2) If any samples show significant number of coliform colonies, the site will be re-tested to confirm a suspect area.
- 3) If additional testing shows similar results, a surface water sample will be collected, and sent to a certified laboratory to be analyzed for *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria, the best indicator of fecal pollution and the possible presence of harmful pathogens.
- 4) If the results show levels of *E. coli* bacteria above 200 *ecoli*/100ml (NYS Health Dept Swimming Guidance Level), a nearby septic system may have a problem. The residents nearest the sample location will be notified, and the CLPA will recommend a dye test of nearby systems, or an inspection by a licensed professional, and will suggest some possible solutions for correcting the problem.

For more information about coliform bacteria, visit

http://www.health.state.ny.us/environmental/water/drinking/coliform_bacteria.htm