

## Restricted Activities

Separate US Environmental Protection Agency and/or NYS Department of Environmental Conservation watershed regulations may also be applicable.

- Herbicides, aquacides, and pesticides** must not be used in, stored adjacent to, or disposed of directly into a watercourse or Owasco Lake (except by permit).
- Trash** must not be disposed of (or buried) within 500 feet of a watercourse or Owasco Lake.
- Pollutants** (e.g. fertilizer, soil, sand, ash, manure, etc.) must not be released directly into, nor stored within 500 feet of a watercourse or Owasco Lake (except by permit).
- Junkyards** must not be located within 100 feet of a watercourse or Owasco Lake.
- All existing **private sewage disposal (septic) systems** must be inspected by a certified inspector, in accordance with Cayuga County Health Department and county law, as follows:

System Distance from Owasco Lake	Required Frequency of Inspection	Inspection Years
On shoreline	Every 2 years	2016, 2018, 2020...
Within 500 feet	Every 3 years	2016, 2019, 2022...
Greater than 500 feet	Every 5 years	2015, 2021, 2026...

- All septic systems must be designed—including repairs and expansions to existing systems—by a licensed professional engineer county and approved by the Cayuga County Health Department.
- All septic systems must be located a minimum of 100 feet from the Optimum High Water Mark of Owasco Lake (717.13 as designated by the Health Department) and any watercourse.

### Inspections

On behalf of the City of Auburn and Town of Owasco, the Owasco lake Watershed Inspection Program will make regular inspections of the watershed, including Owasco Lake and all contributing watercourses.

### Penalties

Violations of the above rules and regulations can result in fines between \$200 and \$1000 per violation and/or potential imprisonment of up to one year (in accordance with section 1103 of the NYS Public Health Law).

#### For more information:

#### Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program

7413 County House Rd; Auburn, NY 13021  
(315) 252-4171 x 120, 118  
[www.owascoinspection.org](http://www.owascoinspection.org)

#### Cayuga County Health Department

8 Dill Street; Auburn, NY 13021  
(315) 253-1405  
[www.cayugacounty.us/](http://www.cayugacounty.us/)

#### Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

7413 County House Rd; Auburn, NY 13021  
(315) 252-4171  
[www.cayugaswcd.org](http://www.cayugaswcd.org)

# Owasco Lake Watershed

## Rules and Regulations

Where we live, work, and play together.



# Welcome to the Owasco Lake Watershed!

## Did you know?

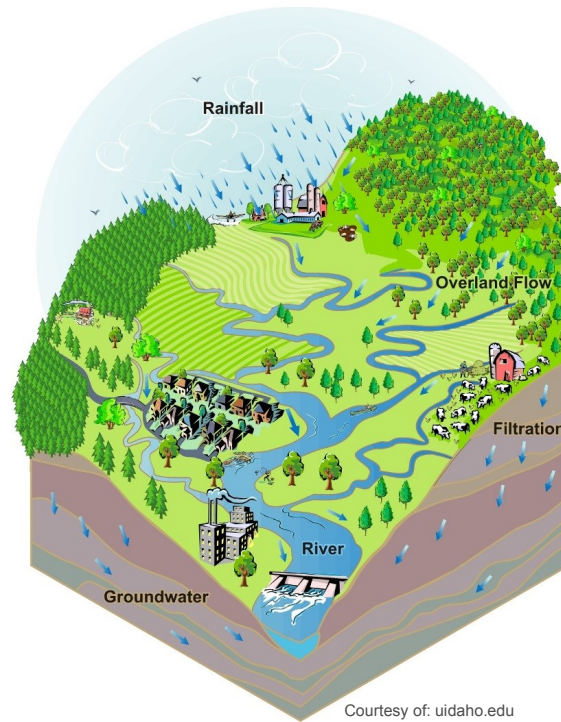
- Owasco Lake provides drinking water to over 44,000 people in Cayuga County.
- The watershed covers over 200 square miles within portions of Tompkins, Onondaga, and Cayuga Counties.
- Water from 14 towns and 2 villages in these counties eventually flows to Owasco Lake.
- Owasco is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest of the 11 Finger Lakes.
- There are about 20 square miles of land for each square mile of Owasco Lake, so what we do on land impacts the water quality in Owasco Lake.

We hope to provide valuable guidance throughout this document, introducing you to the watershed and identifying the rules and regulations established to protect water quality.

The watershed rules and regulations limit certain activities within specific distances of open water, including streams and Owasco Lake. We encourage you to become familiar with them and keep this document handy for reference.

We are always available to answer any questions and provide assistance at any time of the year!

(Contact information on back center panel)



An illustration of how stormwater moves and is stored in a watershed.

## What is a watershed?

No matter where you are on earth, you're in a watershed—an area of land where surface water drains and ends up in a stream, lake, or ocean.

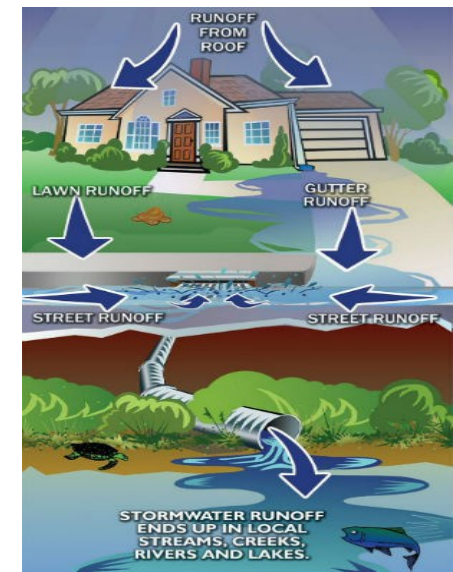
We depend on watersheds to:

- Store and transport drinking water.
- Filter wastewater and stormwater.
- Maintain the balance between natural processes and human activities for healthy lakes, rivers, and streams.

## What impacts water quality?

Rainfall and snowmelt can quickly move soil, nutrients, and chemicals into waterways. This polluted runoff from across the landscape flows to Owasco Lake—via tributaries like streams and ditches—and deteriorates water quality. This means:

- Drinking water treatment and filtration can be more expensive.
- Fishing, swimming, and other recreational activities may be restricted.
- Declining habitat for native aquatic species, plants, and animals.



## What can I do?

If everyone residing in and/or visiting the watershed remains vigilant to pollutants, minimizes impacts on the land, and follows the rules and regulations, tributary and lake water quality will remain high, now and for future generations.