



Municipality of the County of Kings

Lake Monitoring Program

Policy Category	Engineering & Public Works	Most Recent Amendment	N/A
First Council Approval	May 5, 2026	Future Review Date	May 2029

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to formalize the Municipality’s ongoing commitment to the volunteer-based Lake Monitoring Program in a clear, non-regulatory, and supportive framework. The Program provides long-term water quality data to support environmental awareness, and document changes in lake health. It does not grant or imply any statutory or regulatory authority to the Municipality over lakes or lake monitoring activities.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to the Municipality’s coordination and support of the Municipality’s Lake Monitoring Program, which has operated continuously since 1997 (with some lakes monitored since 1992). The Program currently monitors thirteen lakes located within the Municipality through community volunteers and Municipal staff support.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Citizen-science:** The voluntary participation of the general public in scientific research, collaborating with scientists to collect data, analyze results, and solve real world problems.
- 3.2 **Lake Monitoring Program:** A volunteer-lead program administered by the Municipality of the County of Kings to monitor lake health of thirteen lakes within the Municipality by identifying water quality trends.
- 3.3 **Secchi depth:** The depth at which a standard 20-30 cm black and white disk, lowered into the water, is no longer visible to the human eye.

4. Policy Statements

The Municipality of the County of Kings will:

- Maintain the Lake Monitoring Program as a volunteer-driven, citizen-science initiative that collects water quality data to assess and document long-term changes in lake health.
- Support the Program through coordination, volunteer training, sample collection logistics, laboratory analysis (where feasible using existing resources), and public reporting, while clearly communicating that the Program is informational only and does not constitute regulatory oversight.

- Use program data to promote environmental stewardship without creating new regulatory requirements.

Key operational elements of the Program:

4.1 Volunteer Sampling

- 4.1.1 Volunteers collect samples from the deepest point of each lake (marked by buoy) once per month from May to September (generally on the third Sunday of the month, weather permitting). Sampling includes surface and deep-water samples (combined to create two composite sample replicates), secchi depth, water and air temperature, weather conditions, and other field observations as per established protocols.
- 4.1.2 Field observations such as blue green algae blooms and significant drops in water levels are to be directly reported to Nova Scotia Department of Environmental and Climate Change Office: 1-877-936-8476 (toll free) Regional office for Western Regions; Kings County, Annapolis County and West Hants: 902-679-6086.

4.2 Sample Processing and Analysis

- 4.2.1 Municipal staff collect samples from volunteers the day following sampling, maintain chain-of-custody procedures, and transport them in a cooler with ice to an accredited external laboratory. Samples are analyzed for parameters including Total Phosphorus, Total Nitrogen, Chlorophyll-a, and others required for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment Water Quality Index. The Municipality may perform limited internal analysis where feasible.

4.3 Annual Reporting

- 4.3.1 Results are compiled into an annual report and presented to Municipal Council by an external consultant, following the field season. Volunteers are notified of the results and the date/time of the Council presentation so they may attend if desired.

4.4 Data Publication and Transparency

- 4.4.1 Annual reports and data summaries are posted on the Municipal website under the Lake Monitoring Program section to ensure public access and transparency.

4.5 Additional Elements

- 4.5.1 The Program may reference historical data, coordinate with external partners (such as volunteer groups or provincial guidelines), and include clear disclaimers that all information is for educational and public awareness purposes only.

4.6 Financial Implications

- 4.6.1 Laboratory costs and costs associated with external analysis, together with related incidental expenses, will be included in the Municipality's annual Operating Budget.

4.7 Monitoring and Review

- 4.7.1 This Policy will be reviewed every five years or as required by Council.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Council will:

5.1.1 Receive the annual report and provide ongoing policy direction.

5.2 Municipal Staff will:

5.2.1 Coordinate volunteer training (spring meeting), sample pickup and transport, laboratory submissions, data analysis/reporting, website updates, and volunteer notifications.

5.3 Volunteers will:

5.3.1 Perform field sampling and data recording in accordance with training and protocols.

5.4 The Chief Administrative Officer will:

5.4.1 Implement this Policy;

5.4.2 Identify and propose revisions to this Policy.

6. Amendments

Date	Amendments