

Lagoon City Canal Maintenance Program Fact Sheet

Understanding the Program

What is the Canal Maintenance Program?

The Lagoon City Canal Maintenance Program is a year-round program designed to support navigable waterways while protecting fish habitat and the long-term health of Lagoon City's canal system.

The program includes several complementary activities, including:

- Canal skimming
- Aquatic weed harvesting
- Oxygenation (Clean-Flo™ System)
- Dredging
- Equipment maintenance and monitoring

What is canal skimming?

Canal skimming typically occurs each spring before aquatic weed harvesting begins.

Skimming removes floating vegetation, algae and other surface debris from the surface of Lagoon City's waterways.

What is aquatic weed harvesting?

Aquatic weed harvesting removes submerged aquatic vegetation from Lagoon City's canals to improve navigation and maintain the waterways.

Harvesting activities are considered in-water works and are subject to provincial and federal regulatory timing windows established to protect fish spawning, migration and other sensitive aquatic life stages.

Beginning in 2026, harvesting operations commence following July 15 and continue to October.

What is the Clean-Flo™ Oxygenation System?

The Clean-Flo™ System introduces oxygen into Lagoon City's waterways by delivering a steady stream of microbubbles from the bottom of the canal to the surface. Increasing dissolved oxygen throughout the water column supports water quality, reduces odours and creates conditions that help naturally break down accumulated organic material.

What is dredging?

Dredging is the physical removal of accumulated sediment and organic material from the bottom of Lagoon City's waterways where reduced depth affects navigation or canal function.

Who is responsible for the Canal Maintenance Program?

Township of Ramara:

The Township owns and operates Lagoon City's canal system.

Township staff are responsible for:

- administering the Canal Maintenance Program;
- obtaining regulatory approvals;
- managing equipment and contractors;
- carrying out maintenance activities; and
- ensuring operations comply with applicable legislation.

Lagoon City Parks and Waterways Commission (LCPWC)

The LCPWC provides governance and oversight of the Canal Maintenance Program.

The Commission establishes priorities for the program and provides strategic direction regarding the long-term management of Lagoon City's waterways.

Township staff administer the program on the Commission's behalf.

Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

The DFO regulates activities that may impact fish habitat. Where required, the DFO reviews proposed in-water works and issues approvals before work proceeds.

What does a typical canal maintenance season look like?

While weather, water levels and regulatory requirements can influence the schedule, a typical maintenance season includes:

- Spring: Canal skimming begins, where permitted, to remove floating vegetation, algae and surface debris.
- July 15 – October 1: Aquatic weed harvesting takes place during the approved in-water work window established to protect fish spawning and other sensitive aquatic life stages.
- Fall: Equipment maintenance, program review and planning for future improvements.
- Spring, Summer, Fall: Oxygenation continues to support water quality and help reduce the accumulation of organic material.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why do the canals have more vegetation this year?

More than one factor has contributed to the condition of Lagoon City's canals this season.

- Higher-than-normal water levels following the spring flooding resulted in increased debris entering the canal system.
- Canal skimming was delayed while the Township completed the required federal review process before mechanical maintenance activities could begin.

Together, these factors resulted in residents seeing more floating vegetation and debris than in previous years before harvesting operations could begin.

It is important to note that aquatic weed harvesting was not significantly delayed. Harvesting activities are subject to established provincial and federal timing windows to protect fish spawning and other sensitive aquatic life stages and was scheduled to begin after July 15.

It is also important to note that aquatic herbicide applications were discontinued beginning with the 2025 canal maintenance season. As this practice was not part of the 2025 program, it is not a factor contributing to the differences residents have observed in 2026.

Why was the Canal Maintenance Program reviewed?

Following the 2025 canal maintenance season, Township staff undertook a comprehensive operational review of the Canal Maintenance Program to ensure it reflected current legislation, regulatory requirements and evolving industry best practices.

As part of that review, staff consulted with the appropriate regulatory agencies to confirm current legislative requirements applicable to Lagoon City's canal system.

Why did the Township require Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) approval?

Through the operational review, Township staff confirmed that Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) review and authorization were required before mechanical aquatic weed harvesting activities could proceed. As the owner and operator of Lagoon City's canal system, the Township has a responsibility to ensure maintenance activities comply with applicable legislation and regulatory requirements before work begins.

Did the Township apply to the DFO too late?

In March 2026, the Township submitted a Request for Project Review to the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). A Request for Project Review is different from a Fisheries Act Authorization application and follows a different regulatory process.

Some public discussion has referenced legislated timelines that apply to Fisheries Act Authorization applications. Those timelines did not apply to the Township's Request for Project Review.

Based on information provided by the DFO at the time of submission, the anticipated review timeline aligned with the Township's planned maintenance schedule.

I thought weed harvesting started on July 1.

Aquatic weed harvesting is considered an in-water work. Provincial and federal agencies establish timing windows to protect fish spawning, migration and other sensitive aquatic life stages. Following the operational review, the Township updated the harvesting schedule to align with current provincial and federal regulatory timing windows, which is July 15.

Why did the Township discontinue herbicide applications?

Following a review of aquatic weed control methods and programs, the Township discontinued herbicide applications beginning with the 2025 canal maintenance season. The review considered environmental protection, water system health, fish habitat preservation, operational costs and long-term sustainability.

Why has the Canal Maintenance Program changed?

Residents have seen changes to the Canal Maintenance Program over the past two years as the Township has undertaken operational reviews and confirmed current legislative requirements applicable to Lagoon City's unique canal system.

As legislative requirements, regulatory expectations and industry best practices continue to evolve, the Township has a responsibility to adapt its practices to ensure the program is delivered safely, responsibly and in compliance with applicable legislation.

While some maintenance practices have changed, the Township remains committed to maintaining navigable waterways while protecting fish habitat and the broader aquatic ecosystem.