



Lake Alpine Water Company

Summer Updates

Recreational use: Bear Lake is the source of water for Lake Alpine Water Company (LAWC) customers. It comes from springs located high on the home run slopes as well as snow melt and rain run-off. Through a legislative exemption, Bear Lake is also open for recreational use by Bear Valley Residents, Inc. (BVRI) members only. It's ok to swim, wade, paddle board, kayak, sail, wind surf, float, fish, and row. It is not ok to use any type of motorized vessel or to have pets at the lake.

Thank you for being a conscientious lake visitor. Please join BVRI at bvri.org and enjoy your summer.

Water temperature: The spillway at Bear Lake has been flowing since March 15, 2024. Once the spillway stops flowing, the lake will start warming up. I will measure the surface temperature and clarity each week and post the results on NextDoor.

Algae Blooms: We are lucky that Bear Lake is mostly free of significant algae blooms. One trigger can be the Canada Geese that come in the spring. We put out night strobes that disturb their sleep so that the geese will leave. Please don't move the strobes. We will remove them in summer if the geese are gone. Another trigger can be the pollen bloom, especially if it is combined with a heat wave. We will keep the oxygen pumping during the pine pollen season to tie up the nutrients and hopefully limit algae blooms.

Sunscreen Use: We also need to make sure the lake ecosystem is balanced. The cycle of phytoplankton algae to zooplankton to bugs, amphibians and fish is important for controlling algae and maintaining water clarity and oxygen levels. Most of these zooplankton and bugs live on the water's surface where we play and where our sunscreen washes off into the water. In recent years there has been a lot of information about sunscreen ingredients, and which are safest for you and best for the environment. If you are new to this topic, here is a good summary article.

<https://www.wederm.com/2021/08/24/mineral-vs-chemical-sunscreen-which-is-best/>. Research is revealing that chemical-based sunscreens are also hazardous to freshwater organisms in similar ways that they are damaging to coral reefs and ocean organisms. Here's another good article.

<https://smartwatermagazine.com/news/university-alberta/common-sunscreen-ingredients-prove-dangerous-freshwater-ecosystems>

LAWC encourages all Bear Lake visitors to use only 'Reef-safe' mineral sunscreens made without chemical blockers. The best products are made from non-nano titanium dioxide and zinc oxide, and they are available at Bear Valley Adventure Company and the General Store.

For your drinking water quality, the Granular Activated Carbon filters at the treatment plant can remove sunscreen chemicals. In the lake, we can proactively provide a healthy environment for creatures by reducing their exposure, too. Keeping Bear Lake healthy is the first step in treatment for your drinking water. Thank you for participating.

As always, feel free to call 209-753-2409 or email info@lakealpinewater.com. Thank you.

Kimi Johnson, Steven Schnitter and Colton Nevin