

2021 Water Quality Monitoring Workshop, Training and Recertification Update

Hello Lake Stewards of Maine!

As we approach spring and summer and the number of people vaccinated for Covid-19 grows, we are paying close attention to the guidance being provided by the Maine CDC concerning group meetings.

It is still too early to predict if it will be possible for LSM to conduct in-person training and recertification workshops this year, because despite vaccinations, the number of new infections is on the rise and co-variants are emerging. However, if all goes well, it is conceivable that it will be safe for us to conduct workshops by mid to late summer (July and August). Unfortunately, we will not be able to make workshop decisions until at least sometime in June.

Safety for our staff and volunteers remains our highest priority.

Please see the detailed information below for both *existing certified lake monitors* and *new (2021) or partially certified monitors (from 2020)*. One way or another, the following options will be available to you early in the season.

For Existing Certified Lake Water Quality Monitors:

Certified Secchi Monitors:

Log on to the [LSM Secchi Simulator](#), answer the associated questions and take an official reading. Your reading will be recorded in the LSM database, indicating that you have received this message and are planning to monitor in 2021. If you are due, or overdue for an in-person workshop, it may be possible for us to offer one near you later in the summer. If not, your in-person requirement will be waived for another year, providing that you use the Secchi Simulator.

Certified Dissolved Oxygen Monitors:

Follow the requirements above for Secchi Monitors, in addition to the following:

Maine DEP and LSM staff will continue to provide a pre-season checkup on your dissolved oxygen meter at no charge. Because of existing social distancing guidelines in Maine, the process of checking meters will likely take longer than in previous years. It may be a few weeks before your meter can be returned to you. This service not only saves you money, it helps to ensure you (and us) that your meter will be in good operating condition at the onset of the season. Volunteers who monitor dissolved oxygen should have already received details; if you monitor dissolved oxygen and haven't received instructions, please contact Tristan@lakestewardsme.org for a copy.

LSM will post a series of review videos and the "2021 DO Quiz". All certified DO monitors are required to complete the quiz. In addition to taking the quiz, you must attend one of the Zoom Tech Support sessions, at which LSM staff will discuss the quiz results with each group of attendees, and, you must submit your first two profiles for review. If no in-person workshops are offered in 2021, your recertification requirements will be waived until 2022, providing that you fulfill the requirements listed above. If in-person recertification workshops become possible later in the summer, we will be in touch with you.

Instructions for sending your first two profiles: Please scan or photograph, and send your first two data sheets of the season to Tristan@lakestewardsme.org. Please make sure the images are legible. Our staff will review your data, and will be in touch if we observe any concerns that should be brought to your attention. This process is very helpful in our data quality assurance process.

Certified Advanced/Baseline Sampling Monitors:

If you have been trained to conduct advanced water quality monitoring, you must fulfill all of the requirements above for Secchi and DO monitors. In addition, we are preparing a quiz that you will be required to complete and submit for LSM staff to review.

Additional opportunities:

We may offer “video auditing” recertification sessions this summer if you have access to a cell phone with video capability. If video, or in-person workshops become available this summer, we will be in touch.

For Lake Water Quality Monitors who attended a Zoom training workshop in 2020, but who have not yet completed an on-the-water certification workshop:

If you attended a Secchi and/or DO training workshop last summer, but were unable to attend a field certification session with LSM or DEP staff, please review the training information that you received last year on the LSM website. Please log on to the LSM Secchi Simulator, take the quiz and a practice Secchi reading.

We are relying on the guidance of the Maine CDC and hope to offer on-the-water training sessions later in the summer, at which time you will be fully certified and able to submit data from your lake to LSM.

If you are not trained and certified, and you would like to become an LSM Certified Lake Monitor:

If you have not previously attended any in-person or Zoom training workshops, please contact LSM and register for a training workshop. LSM will schedule Zoom training sessions, starting in the spring and early summer, at which time we will conduct the indoor portion of the training, explain the certification process, and share details about any in-person workshops that may be offered in 2021. You must register for all workshops in advance. Contact the LSM office if you wish to register.

If you are a professional requiring certification, please contact Tristan@lakestewardsme.org to discuss your options.