

The Lake We Love
North Shore Community School
Ms. Jackson's Class
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My field trip to RiverQuest and to the DECC and Vista Star gave me a better perspective on how important it is to protect the bodies of water found in Minnesota. In 1978, the St. Louis River was not much better than a sewer due to people dumping their waste water directly into the river. Fish kills and big mats of sludge were not an uncommon thing to see. Thanks to the WLSSD for cleaning and filtering the wastewater before returning it back into the river and lake. It is a much healthier and cleaner place.

Almost 900 vessels enter the Great Lakes each year carrying over 35 million tons of goods. The huge lake carriers, also known as lakers, stay close to home by not venturing out of the Great Lakes. On the other hand there are the salties. These are the small ships that head out to the ocean. Both of these ships transport salt, cement, iron ore, coal, limestone, and grain. They also can transport unwanted invasive species into the Great Lakes. For the invasives to get into our waters they would have to travel over 2000 miles to get here and get through 16 locks. Locks are like water elevators. A water lock is an enclosed chamber that lowers or raises the ship. Even though it is a hard and long journey, the invasives still find a way to be transported back into our waters.

Another big problem in Minnesota is pollution. Pollution in Minnesota lakes, rivers, and streams can have a big impact on the environment. If the water is polluted, the fish will die and the animals won't have anything to drink. If the soil is polluted then the plants will not grow and the animals will not have anything to eat. This is why keeping the soil and the water clean is so important. Garbage also pollutes the air, soil, and water around us. There is a way you can help with this project, too. By composting or switching to less harmful materials or even picking up garbage, you could help make a difference.

Over ten people in the United States die each day due to drowning, and over 88% were not wearing a life jacket. Life jackets are different from the orange vests known as Personal Flotation Devices or PFD. Life jackets have a higher buoyancy. Buoyancy is the force that counteracts gravity to make you

float. Life jackets are not the only thing you should worry about when you are on the lakes. You should also worry about hypothermia. Hypothermia is when your body starts shutting down to conserve your body heat. If you ever do find yourself in the cold water get yourself into the H.E.L.P position. It stands for heat emitting lessening position. The average temperature is 46 degrees and can get to about 32 degrees. In less than 20 minutes, you can catch hypothermia. So, it is important to wear a life jacket and know the H.E.L.P position.

Keeping the Great Lakes clean and healthy is so important. You may not think you can make a difference, but you can by getting educated on the topic and trying to find a way you can help the environment. We use water for many different uses such as drinking water, bathing, swimming, and many different reasons. This is why keeping water clean and fresh is so important for future generations.