

## About Ottawa Riverkeeper

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles Outaouais*) is a citizen-based action group that brings people together to protect and promote the ecological health and diversity of the Ottawa River and its tributaries. Expert and independent, our organization advocates for responsible decision-making, public education, participation, access to information, and compliance with protective regulations, for the benefit of our river and our communities. <http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca>

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles Outaouais*) is a licensed member of *Waterkeeper Alliance*, an international grass roots advocacy organization, founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. <http://www.waterkeeper.org>



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This guide is also available in French



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# 10 EASY THINGS YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR SHORELINE

A no-nonsense guide to 'doing your part' for the health and future of the Ottawa River watershed, brought to you by Ottawa Riverkeeper.

[www.ottawariverkeeper.ca](http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca)

*Defending the Ottawa River, Protecting our Communities.*

# 10 EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SHORELINE

## 1 Stop the mowing!

Leave a buffer of at least 5 meters at the shore and nature will do the rest! You can still mow a path to the shoreline for water access but leave the rest to nature.

## 2 Create a buffer of shrubs and trees along the shore.

Deep shrub and tree roots protect shorelines from erosion, reduce runoff and provide habitats for wildlife.

## 3 Reduce your runoff by installing a rain barrel and/or a rain garden.

By reducing storm water runoff, you reduce the pollutants that get washed into the river. Rain barrels capture the rain from your roof, while rain gardens catch water in depressions on your property.

## 4 Avoid using fertilizer and pesticides.

The chemicals you use on your property eventually make it into the water, causing algae blooms and harming wildlife. Consider planting species that grow naturally in your area, which generally require fewer inputs of fertilizers and pesticides.

## 5 Keep informed!

Being aware of your local shoreline regulations ensures that you are following the rules when constructing on your shoreline property.

## 6 Minimize the effects of recreational boating.

- Opt to use an efficient four-stroke engine instead of a two-stroke engine that can dump up to 30% of their unburned fuel into the water.
- Clean your boat before travelling to a new body of water to reduce the spread of invasive species.
- Reduce your wake...wave action hurts the shoreline.

## 7 Leave the riverbed alone.

Avoid dumping sand, raking, or dredging your shoreline, which can destroy fish spawning areas and delicate species' habitats.

## 8 Maintain your septic system.

Many rural properties have septic systems. If your property is one of them, have your tank inspected for sludge and scum build-up every 3-5 years and have your effluent filter checked and cleaned yearly. Don't have an effluent filter? Consider getting one installed.

## 9 Opt for a low impact dock.

Docks like pipe or floating docks allow free movement of water, reducing disruption to aquatic life and shores.

## 10 Become a shoreline steward.

Get out and enjoy your shoreline with friends and family and report interesting species, problems and changes on your shoreline to Ottawa Riverkeeper. Share your knowledge about the importance of healthy shorelines with neighbours!

See anything unusual, or have questions? **1-888-9KEEPER.**

For information on how to improve your shoreline contact Ottawa Riverkeeper: [www.ottawariverkeeper.ca](http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca)