



FEBRUARY 2026

SAVE THE DATE: Annual meeting-Sat, June 6, 2026; 10 am at the Harwich Community Center!

Hope you are staying warm during this cold snap that is freezing many of our ponds! Welcome to our first monthly Harwich Ponds Coalition Update for 2026! (the last one was our EOY 2025 recap sent out in January which you can find on our website). www.harwichwaters.org We plan to share pond related updates and educational tidbits in our efforts to advocate for our pond health in Harwich as we move through 2026.

Harwich Volunteer Fair

For the second year in a row, HPC was excited to participate in the town's Volunteer Fair at the Harwich Community Center on January 29. We were happy to meet some new faces who were interested in learning more about what we do – and a few of them volunteered to help us in our pond testing efforts!

Pond Testing

We are waiting to hear from our town partners on which ponds will be prioritized through the budget process for new cyanobacteria testing collaboration with APCC(Association to Preserve Cape Cod). More details to follow, along with testing training dates. PALS(Ponds and Lakes Stewardship) testing will continue in April and August with our historical sample of ponds(Hinckleys, Bucks, John Joseph, Aunt Edies, Skinequit, Sand Pond, West Reservoir).

What Can We All Do to Protect our Ponds?



- Continue to advocate for sewers. Harwich will be publishing the revised CWMP (Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan) in the next few weeks.
- Investigate Innovative/Alternative Septic Systems for properties that are not in the sewer plan: <https://www.masstc.org/> . Follow Falmouth’s pilot of urine diversion toilets!
- Advocate for the reduction of fertilizers, which can contribute to harmful algae blooms, excessive plant growth, reduced water clarity and severe oxygen depletion. Check out what the other Cape towns are doing!
 - **Nantucket, Orleans and Wellfleet** have all passed home rule petitions which are with the MA state legislature for review.
 - **Barnstable, Brewster, Chatham, Eastham, Mashpee, and Provincetown** adopted strict, nitrogen-oriented regulations in 2014.
- Use Cape-friendly practices on our own properties:
 - Talk to your landscaper to find out what is being applied to your lawn and plants and why? What alternatives are there?
 - Embrace a “Cape Cod lawn” – less lawn, more native plantings.
- Read, research, spread the word – it is up to us to protect our fragile ecosystem.

Check out our Pond Profiles on www.harwichwaters.org and view those beautiful blue ponds and the stories behind them. Let’s do our part to keep our ponds healthy!

Till next month!