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Interim Control By-law No. 137-09

Interim Control By-law aimed at reinforcing provisions respecting the protection of the shorelines of lakes and watercourses

With recent episodes of algal bloom caused by the presence of cyanobacteria, the quality of water in some of the lakes and watercourses on the province's territory has been greatly affected and the Outaouais area holds many of these infected lakes. Therefore, in an effort to prevent further algal blooms and improve the quality of water on the territory of the MRC, the Council of Mayors of the MRC des Collines have adopted *Interim Control Bylaw No. 137-09*.

The main objective of this new By-law is to reinforce provisions respecting the protection of the shorelines through the introduction of a legal obligation to renaturalize parts of the shorelines of lakes and watercourses.

Therefore, any control of the vegetation, including lawn and grass mowing, tree cutting, and bush clearing, is prohibited within the first **five-meter (5m)** strip along the edge of a lake or watercourse.

Of course, there are some exceptions to this by-law, such as when there is:

- An access window to the lake (5 meters continuous maximum)
- Septic systems
- Constructions anchored in the ground (2 meters maximum)
- Etc. (refer to official copy of the By-law)

Please note that those exceptions are subject to a municipal certificate of authorization.

Also, the By-law specifies that, when there is no natural vegetation in place, measures to renaturalize the shoreline should be undertaken, and this within 24 months of the date when this by-law comes into effect. In summary, **from May 2011**, not having any natural vegetation in the first five-meters of the shoreline will lead to an offence under this By-law.

You can obtain a natural shoreline simply by letting your lawns go so that natural vegetation can take over again.

You can also speed up the process by replanting your shorelines with appropriate native plants such as: Artic willow, Sweet Gale, Blue-flag Iris and many more. It is important to always refer to the municipality to obtain a certificate of authorization if you plan any activities in the shoreline, replanting included. The certificate is free, simple and will ensure that your replanting activities comply with the municipal provisions of the new By-law 137-09.

Please note that anyone found in violation of any provision in the by-law is committing an offence and can be fined from \$300 to \$4,000. Also, the MRC or the Municipality can take action in civil court to enforce all provisions of the By-law. For example, the MRC or the Municipality can obtain a court order from the Superior Court of Quebec to halt any construction activities that would compromise the provisions of the By-law 137-09. The MRC or the Municipality could, in certain situations, demolish any building compromising the provisions of the By-law and rebuild the shoreline at the owner's expense. The cost of such an activity would constitute a priority claim on the building, and this all according to the law.