

# East Lake Village

## Community Association

I manage a 15 acre lake holding approximately 33 million gallons of water which is fed by our own underground well line a couple miles away. Our lake is surrounded by 191 beautiful homes and a large clubhouse. We have a couple of water features and our average depth is about six and a half feet. We have eleven 5HP pumps which circulate and filter the entire lake. We have also installed approximately 26 sweetwater aerators throughout the lake to help with aeration. Over the years we have tried everything imaginable to treat and maintain the water quality while keeping a sound ecosystem and a healthy fishing population. In 2013 we experienced a total fish kill losing nearly ten thousand fish. We figured it was a dissolved oxygen issue but little did we know we had a new algae in our lake called *Prymnesium Parvum* (Golden Algae). This algae releases a toxin to retard other algae but also affects all gill breathing animals causing the fish to suffocate while starving for oxygen. Once your lake has Golden Algae, you cannot get rid of it, you just have to learn how to treat for it which has always required copper sulfate treatments which is a temporary fix.

East Lake Village has a Lake Management Committee that we as staff work with. Over the years we have met with several companies that thought they could solve the Golden Algae problem. After many meetings, and countless hours, nothing panned out. To date, no one has been able to combat this Golden Algae problem across the United States. Everyone has their own silver bullet which is typically the use of chemicals to knock the algae down. We believe we were the first body of water in California to contract the algae and I have notified many other lake managers on how to go about testing for this particular algae when we have seen on the news they are having fish kills. To date there have been five lakes that we were able to help initially detect the cause of their dying fish. Unfortunately they now too have the algae and are still experiencing the fish die offs.

Our lake is popular for boating, and with our depth, we have never been able to incorporate plant life due to the inevitable problems associated with flourishing plants and boat props. We realized that without the plant life, there is no strong competitor for nutrients and this would be very beneficial in fighting the Golden Algae. Containing the plants would be key in our situation.

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I approached the team at Floating Islands West and Jonathon Todd Consulting a couple of years ago. They were kind enough to join one of our Lake Management Committee meetings. We had a very lengthy discussion of what our options may be. With limited funds available, Jonathon suggested a pilot program and with his knowledge was able to come up with a plan based on our size and current circulation and filtration system. We joke now because at that meeting, Jonathon told us that if everything goes as planned, we may potentially experience crystal clear water in about a year. I have personally worked here at East Lake Village for twenty eight years and can honestly say we have never experienced anywhere near this much clarity and healthy looking water.

“Floating Islands West and Jonathan Todd Consulting have transformed our lake. What was budgeted to be a pilot, proved to keep the entire lake clear of any ill effects from the Golden Algae. The water quality, clarity, and overall health of the lake are better than in my memory going back to childhood. We have original homeowners on our lake that have lived here for over thirty years coming in to tell us how wonderful the water looks and that it has never looked anywhere near this nice. Using ecological design strategies JTC and FIW have transformed this lake without the use of any chemicals.” We have not treated our lake with any form of chemical in almost two years.

The aquatic plants chosen coupled with the new highly efficient aeration system (hydraulic flushing) has been the key to our success. This process will also disperse and remove silt from the bottom of the lake which if not eventually removed may have resulted in dredging of the lake to remove the sediment.

The floating islands have far exceeded our expectations when entering into this pilot program nearly two years ago. Our lake is healthy, our fish are happy, and the use of chemicals may be a thing of the past. Floating Islands West and Jonathon Todd Consulting have made our 2,240 home association here in Yorba Linda California a much better place.

Jeff Leinen, Operations Manger

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