

Lake	County	Lake Area (Acres)	Avg Water Clarity (ft)	Value Increases	Value Decreases
				3.2 ft Clarity	3.2 ft Clarity
Anvil	Vilas	377	12	\$13,035	-\$16,243
Big St. Germain	Vilas	1622	10	\$14,494	-\$18,578
Black Oak	Vilas	564	22	\$8,091	-\$9,218
Catfish	Vilas	978	5	\$22,603	-\$34,571
Crawling Stone	Vilas	1483	15	\$10,887	-\$13,035
Flambeau	Vilas	1166	19	\$9,244	-\$10,746
Island	Vilas	305	7	\$18,737	-\$26,221
Kentuck	Vilas	1001	9	\$16,123	-\$21,353
Little St. Germain	Vilas	972	5	\$22,839	-\$35,134
Little Star	Vilas	260	14	\$11,533	-\$13,972
Manitowish	Vilas	496	10	\$15,125	-\$19,631
North Twin	Vilas	2871	29	\$6,502	-\$7,210
Otter	Vilas	174	3	\$28,020	-\$42,531
Papoose	Vilas	422	10	\$14,786	-\$19,063
Plum	Vilas	1057	10	\$14,988	-\$19,400
Presque Isle	Vilas	1165	24	\$7,495	-\$8,453
Scattering Rice	Vilas	263	8	\$17,084	-\$23,080
Shishebogama	Vilas	700	9	\$15,480	-\$20,235
Snipe	Vilas	216	9	\$15,444	-\$20,173
South Turtle	Vilas	466	6	\$19,230	-\$27,203
South Twin	Vilas	628	10	\$14,399	-\$18,422
Spectacle	Vilas	171	8	\$16,780	-\$22,525
Squaw	Vilas	736	4	\$25,211	-\$41,195
Squirrel	Vilas	1309	9	\$15,664	-\$20,552
Towanda	Vilas	139	10	\$14,462	-\$18,526
Upper Buckatabon	Vilas	493	7	\$18,791	-\$26,326
White Sand	Vilas	1181	13	\$12,081	-\$14,786
Yellow Birch	Vilas	192	5	\$22,839	-\$35,134
<b>Average</b>				<b>\$15,784</b>	<b>-\$21,554</b>

## Impact Of Water Clarity On Home Prices In Oneida & Vilas County, WI

A recent study by Dr. Thomas Kemp of UW Eau Claire concluded that the value of home prices increase as lake water clarity increases.

### Clear Lakes = Higher Home Values

This study estimates the residential property value gains associated with improvements in water clarity on 60 Northern Wisconsin lakes. Using a two-stage hedonic model applied to Wisconsin DNR water clarity data information associated with 271 residential home sales obtained from Zillow.com and County property records.

**Results:**

- ◆ Depending upon the lake, an improvement in water clarity by about 3’ would increase average home sales values by \$8,000 to \$30,000. An increase in water clarity of approx. 6’ could increase home prices by as much as \$47,000.
- ◆ On extremely clear lakes an increase in water clarity would not add much more value. However, on a lake with limited clarity, improving water quality could have a significant impact on sales price.
- ◆ Conversely, if water clarity diminishes, the sales value will decline, but more dramatically, due to the logarithmic nature of the relationship.
- ◆ Depending upon the lake, a decrease in water clarity of 3’ could decrease average home sales values by up to \$45,000. A decrease in water clarity of approximately 6’ could decrease home prices by as much as \$64,000.

A complete copy of the referenced report is available at [www.oclra.org](http://www.oclra.org)

Impact of Water Clarity on Home Prices in Oneida & Vilas County, WI  
T. Kemp, UWEC, 2018



## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q: How do you determine the clarity of a lake?

A: We use Secchi disc readings averaged over the year in which the house was most recently sold to determine water quality. Secchi dish water clarity data is available from the WDNR for many lakes in northern Wisconsin.



### Q: Is water clarity the same as water quality?

A: No, our study measures the impact of water clarity, not water quality. Undoubtedly water quality also effects property prices but that was not the focus of the study. Previous work has shown that the perception of water clarity has the most significant impact upon property prices.

### Q: Do the benefits of improving water clarity outweigh the costs ?

A: Uncertain. The causes of poor water clarity and costs associated with improving clarity vary from lake to lake. Poor water clarity can be indicative of poor water quality or it can be a result of the natural environment in which the lake is located.

### Q: Are your findings consistent with similar studies?

A: Yes, although our findings differ somewhat from other similar studies they are within expected ranges. Generally speaking, lake water clarity has a significant impact on the market price of single-family homes.

### Q: What can a homeowner do to protect & improve lake clarity ?

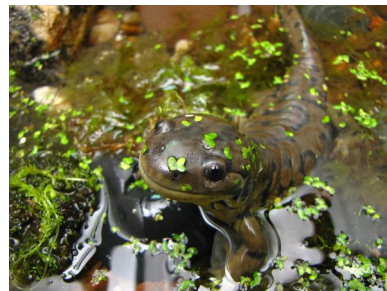
A: Use phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers

A: Protect or restore native shoreland buffers.

A: Avoid filling in wetlands .

A: Install rain gardens to minimize groundwater runoff into the lake.

A: Avoid polluting groundwater.



UWEX, tiger salamander. © P.Skawinski

Lake	County	Lake Area (Acres)	Avg Water Clarity (ft)	Value Increase 3.2 ft Clarity	Value Decrease 3.2 ft Clarity
Big	Oneida	845	3	\$26,648	-\$45,277
Big Stone	Oneida	607	3	\$28,140	-\$42,181
Blue	Oneida	441	19	\$9,283	-\$10,798
Boom	Oneida	365	3	\$26,326	-\$44,333
Buckskin	Oneida	642	9	\$15,852	-\$20,878
Cranberry	Oneida	924	4	\$23,922	-\$37,806
Crescent	Oneida	616	11	\$13,351	-\$16,737
Deer	Oneida	188	4	\$24,828	-\$40,164
Fifth	Oneida	238	2	\$30,228	-\$36,320
George	Oneida	443	3	\$26,221	-\$44,027
Hancock	Oneida	259	5	\$21,215	-\$31,394
Indian	Oneida	354	9	\$15,701	-\$20,616
Kawaguesaga	Oneida	700	11	\$13,351	-\$16,737
Killarney	Oneida	293	2	\$30,655	-\$35,161
Minocqua	Oneida	1339	16	\$10,278	-\$12,170
Laurel	Oneida	249	2	\$29,950	-\$37,082
Little Fork	Oneida	336	5	\$21,850	-\$32,821
Long	Oneida	604	4	\$23,493	-\$36,730
Lost	Oneida	544	5	\$22,296	-\$33,849
Maple	Oneida	131	14	\$11,453	-\$13,855
McCormick	Oneida	113	2	\$32,171	-\$31,144
Oscar-Jenny	Oneida	101	5	\$21,215	-\$31,394
Pelican	Oneida	3545	5	\$23,080	-\$35,715
Pickerel	Oneida	581	5	\$21,423	-\$31,856
Planting Grnd	Oneida	1010	4	\$23,922	-\$37,806
Spirit	Oneida	348	11	\$13,711	-\$17,309
Squash	Oneida	398	16	\$10,457	-\$12,422
Sugar Camp	Oneida	519	12	\$12,782	-\$15,852
Tom Doyle	Oneida	108	5	\$22,448	-\$34,206
Tomahawk	Oneida	3462	18	\$9,648	-\$11,296
Two Sisters	Oneida	719	15	\$11,210	-\$13,501
Virgin	Oneida	261	4	\$24,734	-\$39,915
<b>Average</b>				<b>\$20,370</b>	<b>-\$28,792</b>