

## The Blue-Green Algae (Cyanobacteria) Problem The Karajaal Solution

Frances Beames - Main Street

Blue-green algae! For lakeside dwellers, this has become the plague of the 21st century. Bad for the health, worse for property values...and how can you let your kids go swimming in contaminated water?

Governments present ideas such as inspecting septic tanks, and controlling farm run-off, but these, obviously, are long-term solutions.

So what's a cottage owner to do, give up and move?

Not so fast. There is a solution, and it will begin to show results the year following installation. The Karajaal solution, called Kalena (female Hawaiian name meaning "pure"), works with floating islands, which absorb the phosphates and nitrates that nourish blue algae.



Photo: Chris Beames

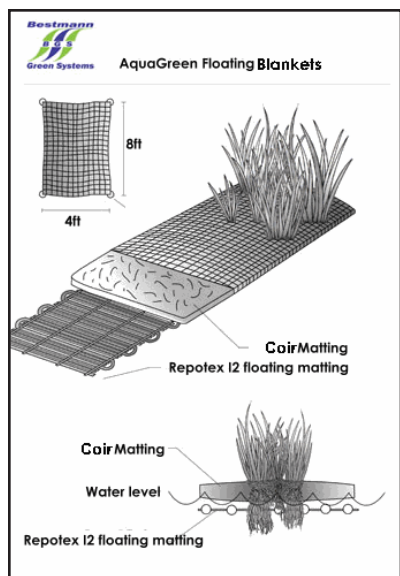
Karajaal Design Aquatic's Steve Brecher & Aviram Mueller

Karajaal Design Aquatic is the brainchild of Aviram Mueller and Steve Brecher. Together they design amazingly beautiful fountains (check out their fantastic water effects for Le Reve, at Wynn Resort, Las Vegas—[www.karajaal.com](http://www.karajaal.com)) combining creativity with the necessary engineering.

Here in the Laurentians, home to countless lakes, Avi and Steve have expanded their creativity and their commitment to the environment by designing a way to combat the dreaded blue-green algae.

First, obviously, one must prevent nutrients from going into your lake, so no cows or pet piggies allowed in the surrounding area.

Now, in front of your cottage, install a Karajaal floating island covered with indigenous plants. Your little island could have cat-tails, sedges, sagittarius, wild iris, yellow lilies, even forget-me-nots. These are all "riparian" plants, whose roots grow in water, and they are native to Quebec. The plant roots reach down into the water, and pull up nutrient-rich material from the lake bottom.



There is no mechanism. This is not a chemical process. Your plants on your island use up the nutrients that otherwise would nourish blue-green algae. "Nature invented this system of 'birth control', says Avi, "and Karajaal copied it." It works.

In the fall, you cut the vegetation on your island, leaving

the roots in the water to freeze. Come spring, your island will not float away, because it is securely anchored, and the plants will grow again.

What do the plants grow in? Obviously, black earth dumped onto your island would disappear immediately. No, the reeds and iris are planted in a Floating Blanket, consisting of a coir matting mounted on a Repotex floating matting. The plant roots then grow right through both mattings to reach the nutrient-rich water that would otherwise feed blue-green algae.

Points to consider: Although this is a proven remedy for 'bad' algae, governments don't invest in treatments at present, and probably won't for the next several years. The common-sense solution is for individual lake-front



owners to join together and start fund-raising, so they can install an floating island in front of every cottage next spring. One lone floating island just won't cut it—everyone on the lake needs to join in.

By the following spring, results will be visible. With cleaner lakes and healthier water, property values will rise, thus paying for the investment.

These islands can be designed to support a fountain, as well, thus further beautifying your property.

Avi and Steve welcome inquiries. They can be reached at 514-448-1755.

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