

We're reopening Veterans' Memorial Park Beach!

It's critical that visitors social distance and follow all the rules to keep the community safe. We know that wearing masks, social distancing and prohibiting basically everything FUN is really hard - but the sun, sand and fresh air will make it all worthwhile.

Effective Saturday, June 13th: Staff will be on hand to check residency at the gate. Please bring identification with you to prove you reside in Sharon until we officially open for the season.

Guests 14 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

There are a lot of new rules to keep everyone safe!

All visitors must **PRE-REGISTER** before arrival by visiting www.sharonrec.com for visits between June 28th – August 23rd. There are a limited number of spots open. No on-site transactions. This year, we're only selling day block passes for **Sharon Residents only** due to strict capacity restrictions and to comply with the new guidelines.

SOCIAL DISTANCING is key. Please give 12' between you and the other party. You can choose your spot on the sand as you normally would when you arrive. Keep 12' between beach blankets, keep 6' between others.

MASKS are required in commons areas like parking lots, walkways and restrooms. Visitors can remove masks in their sunbathing area and must remove masks when swimming.

LIFEGUARDS will be on duty during open beach hours. Please keep 12' away from guards, unless there's an emergency.

Other things:

- Carry-in/Carry-Out trash.
- Bathrooms are restricted to one patron at a time.
- There is no ball playing allowed.
- There is no use of grills.
- This year, we will not be renting kayaks or paddleboards.

Passes are non-transferrable and non-refundable.

All youth under 15 years must be accompanied by an adult over 21 years.

All other beach rules apply.

Guiding Principles: There are several factors that helped us arrive to the decisions to move forward with the daily block model:

1. The beaches in town operate solely on user fees as tax payer dollars are not used to offset any operating costs. The cost to operate the beach is roughly \$149,000 per season.
2. Current social distancing limits attendance potential at both beaches. To go by the recommended model of 1 acre per 200 people in Phase 2, that would allow for 250 individuals at Veterans' Memorial Park Beach and 80 at Community Center Beach. Should recommendations increase at a later phase, it would allow us to sell more passes each time block. In addition, the system we have in place does allow members of the community to decide the day of or the day before based on their personal schedule to register for a block IF there are spots open.
3. Although hours would be limited, we would be able to provide access to more members of the 18,000+ Sharon Community. Selling season passes would only allow 1,000 members of the community to be sold and as such 1/3 could potentially be turned away at any given time due to capacity issues. To give a point of reference, last summer we sold roughly 1,000 car passes and 1,000 walk-in passes in addition to selling daily passes at the gate.
4. When selling daily block passes, we are able to identify exactly who enters for COVID contact tracing purposes.
5. When considering the season pass model, we discovered through much thought:
 - Gate guards could potentially be turning paying season pass holders away when the lot is full and that may not be favorable for those being turned away.
 - How do we find an equitable way to balance car entry and walk-in entry ?
 - There would be significant increased traffic/safety concerns on roads leading to the beach (Gunhouse/Massapoag/Beach/Pond) as cars would line up until we opened resulting in traffic concerns. Conversely, if we didn't close the gates at night, cars would be in the lot prior to our opening and we would be turning people away before we even started the day.
6. Finally, should another wave of COVID come through Massachusetts like other areas of the country are experiencing, we have the ability to shut down registration at any given time and not charge families or have to refund those who have already paid for a season pass.

Summer 2020 Beach Operations FAQ

Hours of Operation:

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach: Daily, 9:00am-7:00pm

Community Center Beach: Daily, 10:00am-6:00pm

Season Dates:

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach: June 28th-August 23rd

Community Center Beach: July 1st- August 23rd

Group Size:

Maximum 10 people

Fee:

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach: 3 Hour Block: Ages 3+: \$3.50 per person 2 and under: Free
There is a maximum of 250 passes sold per block at Veterans' Memorial Park Beach.

Community Center Beach: 4 Hour Block: Block: Ages 3+: \$5.00 per person 2 and under: Free
There is a maximum of 80 passes sold per block at Community Center Beach.

Block Times:

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach:

Three Blocks sold per day; **9:00am-12:00pm, 12:30pm-3:30pm, 4:00pm-7:00pm**

Community Center Beach: Two Blocks sold per day; **10:00am-1:45pm and 2:15pm-6:00pm**

******Announcements will be made 10 minutes prior to the end of the block. Groups must exit the property immediately so the staff can prepare for the next groups arrival.******

How to purchase a Beach Pass:

Step by step instructions are provided on our website. To prepare for sales, please go online to www.sharonrec.com to update your family account or create a new one.

No passes will be sold at the gates.

Once we reach the capacity, that block will be sold out.

- Beach users will need to purchase a day pass online at sharonrec.com, and reserve daily time slots on the beach for each visit. You must register **each member of your party**.
- Daily passes will be released on www.sharonrec.com the Thursday prior for the upcoming week. For example, Thursday at 10am we will release passes for the following Sunday through Saturday.
- Check the weather before you secure your timeslot! Once they sell out, no additional slots will be released.
- Passes are non-transferrable and non-refundable.

What are other communities with lakes/ponds doing this summer?

Stoughton: \$4.50 /per person per day per block (4 hours) / \$3.50 per block for seniors

Wayland: \$10/per person per day per block (4 hours)

Natick: \$21/person per day per block (3.5 hours)

I purchased back to back blocks – Can I stay?

No, as the beach and parking lot will need to be completely emptied. The allotted time in between the blocks will be used for sanitation and beach pick up. Failure to comply will result in revoking purchasing abilities.

Can I purchase a season pass for the entire summer?

Season passes will not be sold this year.

Proof of Purchase/Residency:

At the gate you will be required to show proof of purchase for everyone in your group. Proof of purchase includes your printed receipt and/or email confirmation with the correct date and time of your visit. In addition, please have proof of residency on hand for each person in your party. Proof includes: Driver's license, registration, or utility bill that matches party reservation with current address.

Can non-residents purchase daily passes?

As we expect residents to stay local this year, daily passes are not available for non-residents. Unfortunately, residents with out-of-town guests will not be allowed either.

I don't have internet access or don't feel comfortable using technology. How do I purchase a daily block pass?

You can visit our office during normal business to meet with our department staff that will help you purchase a daily block pass. Please wear a face covering and practice social distancing when entering our facility! Reduced facility hours are: Monday-Wednesday, 9am-12pm, Thursday, 3:00-6:00pm until July 6th or when Phase III is expected to begin.

Walk-ins, Bikers:

All walk-in visitors must pre-register and check in with Gate Guards. Maintain social distancing and provide proof of purchase and residency.

Masks & Face Coverings:

If you are over the age of 2, you must wear a face covering or mask when you cannot maintain feet of distance between yourself and others.

- You must remove your mask for swimming.
- You may remove your mask while seated within in your beach area.

Hygiene:

Wash your hands often.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.

If you are not feeling well, please stay home.

Restrooms:

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach: Restrooms will be open with strict capacity controls for the safety of visitors; limited to one patron at a time. Patrons waiting to use a bathroom must wait outside the bathhouse behind 6 foot waiting lines. Please only use in the event of an emergency. Bathrooms will be professionally cleaned daily and intermittently by staff in between block visits.

Community Center Beach: A portable sanitation unit will be available across from the beach.

Social Distancing in and out of the water:

If walking to the lake to enjoy your time block, enter through boat launch gates. If visiting by car, please enter through the main gate.

- You must maintain a distance of 6 feet between individuals not in the same household group
- You must maintain 12 feet between groups/towels/blankets.

Swim Areas:

Swim areas will be clearly defined with blue and white rope in the water. Beyond that area is strictly for kayak storage users.

Food/Beverages:

This summer, the concession stand will not be available. We recommend that you bring water, as hydration is very important when visiting the beach. There is no water fountain at this site. Guests are welcome to bring their own food/drink for consumption on-site. Grills, alcoholic beverages and glass containers are not permitted.

Trash:

All barrels have been removed from the grounds. Groups and individuals are required to follow a **CARRY IN - CARRY OUT POLICY** for all of their belongings. We ask that groups/individuals leave no trace after visiting our facilities. Beachgoers who leave trash behind may lose their beach pass purchasing privileges.

Can I Purchase A Boat Pass?

2020 Boat passes are available by visiting <https://sharonbeach.cityhallsystems.com/>.

Boat Ramp Permits allow use of the Town Boat Ramp to launch your boat and park in the boat ramp lot. Boat Ramp Permits are to be issued in pairs, one sticker to be placed on the boat and one sticker to be placed on the vehicle, rear passenger window. All boat owners launching boats into Lake Massapoag are required to read and understand the DCR Massachusetts Lakes and Ponds Program Flyer concerning invasive species. Boat owners are required to properly inspect their vessel upon entrance and exit from Lake Massapoag. Gate attendants will be on hand during beach operating hours to also ensure there are no weeds or invasive species on your boat. Failure to adhere to requirements may result in the suspension or revocation of your ability to use your boat in Lake Massapoag.

Non-motorized, non-trailerred boats that are transported to the beach by car do not require a Boat Ramp Permit. If vehicles have a season pass sticker, they may park in their car in the lot and launch their non-motorized watercraft outside our swim area. If not, they may unload/load their watercraft in the boat launch area and move their vehicle to Sharon High School parking lot.

- * The Town of Sharon does not permit any jet propelled watercraft in Lake Massapoag.
- * All motorboats must be 60 horsepower or less.
- * Personal floatation devices are required.

REMINDER: In accordance with Massachusetts Boating Law 323 CMR 2.07: Operation, Section (1) Distance, (c) Motorboats, shall not be operated: (2) within 75 feet of the seaward boundary of a public or private swimming beach, if designated by markers, floats or otherwise.

Kayak/SUP at Lake Massapoag

If you wish to use your kayak/canoe/SUP you may drop it off at boat launch and park your car at the high school. There is no fee for this option. You may not park at boat launch without a valid permit.

KAYAK Storage

All Kayak Storage racks have been sold out for the 2020 season. Passes will be sent to all kayak storage owners so they can show proof of participation in our kayak storage program. No additional fee is required this summer for those coming to access their personal watercraft that is stored in one of our 108 spots. Those with kayak storage should display their tag so they can be allowed in to access their watercraft. (Tags will be sent out shortly - in the meantime give the guard your name that will be checked against a list of storage users).

Can I access the beach when it is not staffed?

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach: Gates will be locked during the night so please remove your vehicle by 9pm if visiting after hours.

Community Center Beach: Before 10am and after 6pm, Community Center Beach will be available for **active recreation only** for resident use at your own risk - free of charge. **Please see the posted sign at the gate which explains all approved activities.**

Where can I fish on Lake Massapoag?

Please enjoy one of the many coves around the lake that isn't in swim or active recreation areas.

Proof of Purchase:

Beach Staff will check proof of purchase upon entry to the parking lot. Provide a paper copy or a digital receipt (with Sharon Recreation receipt #) to the attendant, the same way you would show your ticket at a concert venue. Every member of your group must have proof of registration to enter. Residency is determined by the current year Sharon Town Census.

Parking:

No loitering or tailgating in the lot.

Entry/Exit:

Please follow the posted signs. Waterfront will close for swimming 10 minutes prior to your time slot expiration.

What to Expect at the Beach**Lifeguards:**

Lifeguards will be on duty during open beach hours. Do not distract a lifeguard; only get the attention of a lifeguard for emergencies. There will be an area coned off for lifeguards only. Please don't enter unless it is an emergency.

Please listen to the lifeguards and gate guards.

Lifeguards are trained to scan for swimmers in danger and thwart accidents, not to manage the behavior and social distancing of children. Please watch your own children in the water. Non-swimmers of any age cannot be left alone. Parents of non-swimmers must be in the water with the child at all times, even if the child is in the shallow end. Remember, most youth rescues happen while a parent is present. Lifeguards may blow a whistle, or use their voice or megaphone to alert swimmers of the rules.

Docks:

Will be removed for the summer as they don't allow for proper social distancing.

Lost & Found:

Lost and Found items will be moved to the beach office.

Is the Water Tested?

Yes, once weekly, water samples are sent to a lab to test for E. Coli or Enterococci. The results of the tests are posted online. The state threshold for safe swimming is 235/100ml or geometric mean of 5 recent samples >126/100ml. Typically, our beach and swim area test in the single digits well below the safety threshold. If they would ever reach the threshold, we close the beach until the levels return to normal.

Veterans' Memorial Park Beach and Community Center Beach is permitted to operate a bathing beach by the Local Board of Health and note that the beach is not monitored for bacteria outside of the specified season date range.

What Else Should I Know?

Beaches prohibit the use of the following:

- Inflatables of any kind. If it has a valve or is able to be punctured, it is not allowed.
- Snorkels, kickboards, flippers, SCUBA gear.
- No amplified music.
- No wood, charcoal or propane grills.
- No ball playing, no discs, or lawn games of any kind.
- Dogs and pets are not allowed on town beach property from April 15th through October 15th.
- USCG Types IV and V are not allowed. Any life jackets or vests that are USCG Types I, II and III are allowed.

Weather Events:

Rain, wind and low temperatures weather closings will be at the discretion of the Recreation Department and published on the Recreation Department Webpage and Facebook page.

The beach will be cleared during storms with thunder/lightning. All patrons must exit the beach property and may be readmitted if weather remains thunder free for 30 minutes and lightning free for 1 hour. No refunds will be issued if the beach must be cleared.

Why such strict policies?

We care about the safety of our community. This plan allows us the flexibility to cease operations should there be a spike in cases or if people do not follow outlined policies. We hope that our residents will be respectful to our staff and adhere to our policies put in place.

Questions: Please call the Recreation Office at (781) 784-1530 during normal business hours if you have trouble with the online portal or have difficulty accessing the online platform during normal business hours.

We understand this year operations are different and we appreciate your patience. We ask that you please cooperate with lakefront staff.

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