Lake Life Guide



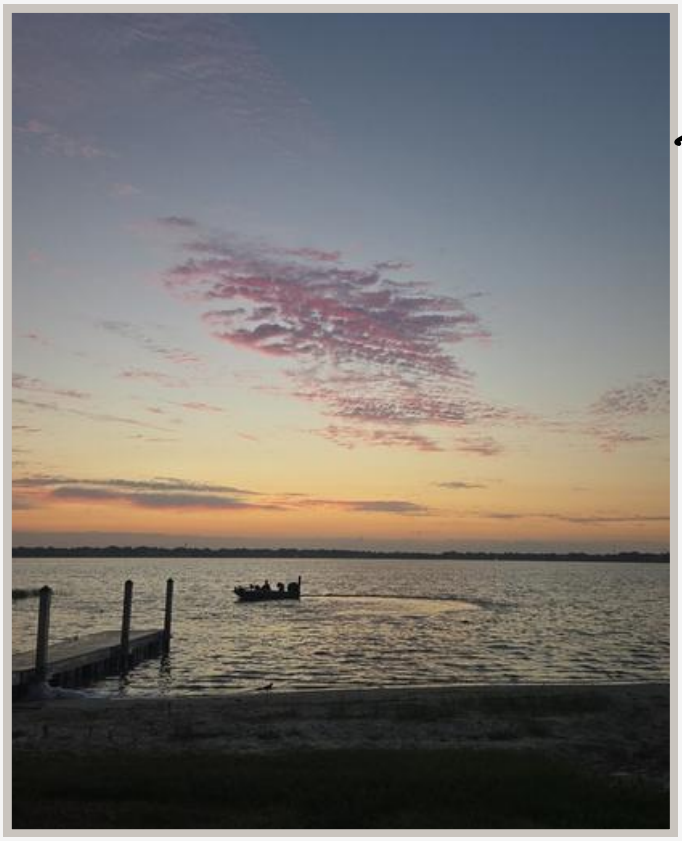
YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LIVING THE LAKE LIFE

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE MAKING YOUR MOVE TO POLK COUNTY



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YOUR LAKE FRONT LADY
FL REALTOR | EPIQUE AREA LEADER
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Hello,

Hi, I'm Desiree Pelletier, but most people know me as The Lakefront Lady.

I believe buying a home on the water is about so much more than finding a beautiful view. It's about finding the lifestyle that fits you.

Whether you dream of spending your weekends boating, fishing, paddleboarding, or watching the sunset from your dock—or you're the type who loves the charm of a beautiful lake town but would rather admire the water from a safe distance (especially if alligators aren't your thing!)—I've got you covered.

After moving to Central Florida from Key West, I fell in love with the incredible lake life that exists right here in Polk County. I quickly realized there wasn't one place where people could learn everything they needed to know about buying, owning, and enjoying waterfront property or the communities built around it.

That's why I created this guide.

As a Realtor specializing in lakefront and lake-adjacent homes throughout Central Florida, my goal is to help you understand not only the homes, but also the lakes, the neighborhoods, the lifestyle, and everything that comes with living near the water. I'm not here to give you a sales pitch. I'm here to be your trusted local resource so you can make confident decisions, whether you're buying your first home, your forever home, or simply searching for the right place to call home.

I hope this guide helps you discover why Florida's best lake life isn't on the coast—it's right here in the heart of it.
Welcome to lake life.

What You'll Find in This Guide
✓ The communities that make this area special
✓ Honest, at-a-glance comparisons to help you choose
✓ Activites & a "Don't Forget" Checklist
✓ Healthcare, services, and practical peace of mind and much more

Let's Connect

Scan the QR code to get started

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Why People Are Making The Move

Every week, more people are trading high-density city living for the tranquility of the lakes. Here's what they're moving toward:

✓ Direct access to world-class fishing, boating, and watersports

✓ Slower pace of living with convenient highway access to Orlando & Tampa

✓ A stronger, real sense of community

✓ Stunning daily lake sunsets and year-round outdoor weather

✓ Beautiful natural scenery, every day

✓ Vibrant, welcoming affordable waterfront communities

✓ A lifestyle built on experiences

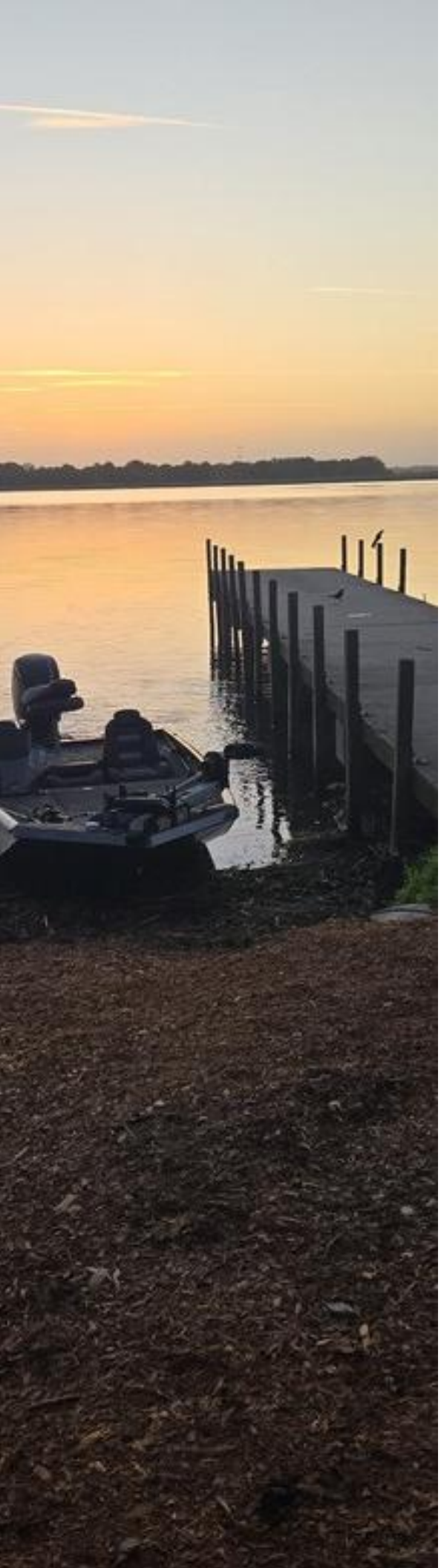
✓ Close proximity to state parks, wildlife management areas, and paved trails

Don't just take our word for it—check out what one of our recent clients gushed about!



★★★★★

"We didn't just change our address; we completely elevated our lifestyle! Desiree helped us find a dream property right on the water in Polk County. Living near the lake chain means weekends are spent on the boat, fishing with the grandkids, and watching the sunset from our back dock. We couldn't be happier with our move!" — Happy Polk County Homeowner



Discover

POLK CITY & THE POLK COUNTY LAKES

Welcome to Central Florida's Lake Country — Polk County is home to over 550 lakes, making it a paradise for boaters, anglers, and water sports enthusiasts alike. Anchored by Polk City—known for its scenic countryside, pristine lake access, and peaceful environment—this region offers an incredible balance of natural beauty and central convenience. Located right between Tampa and Orlando, you get rural tranquility without sacrificing access to major metropolitan centers.

- **WHY CHOOSE POLK COUNTY LAKE LIFE?**
- Hundreds of lakes featuring famous freshwater chains
- Unmatched bass fishing, wakeboarding, waterskiing, and kayaking
- Prime central location right off the I-4 corridor
- Exceptional value for lakefront land and single-family waterfront homes

The Community & Why People Love It Here

- A strong mix of retirees, families, and remote workers
- Major employer: Bruce Power
- Active arts, festivals, and farmers' markets year-round
- Active outdoor culture with year-round community festivals, farmers' markets, and water shows
- A lifestyle built on experiences, not commuting
- Every week surrounding lakes & parks feature outside activities that are family friendly.

Polk County Lakes & Communities at a Glance



At a Glance

Noteable Neighborhoods

Six Premier Areas to Explore for the Waterfront Lifestyle

Polk City:

Highlights: Quiet, scenic lakefront homes, spacious acreage properties, immediate access to Lake Madison, Lake Van, and the Green Swamp.

Winter Haven:

Highlights: The "Chain of Lakes City" featuring 50 interconnected lakes with canal locks, water-skiing traditions, and waterfront dining.

Lakeland:

Highlights: Historic charm, urban lakes (Lake Hollingsworth, Lake Morton), vibrant dining, and luxury lakeside estates.

Lake Wales:

Highlights: Rolling hills, historic Lake Wailes, Bok Tower Gardens, and large freshwater recreational lakes like Lake Lake Pierce and Lake Weohyakapka (Lake Walk-in-Water).

Auburndale:

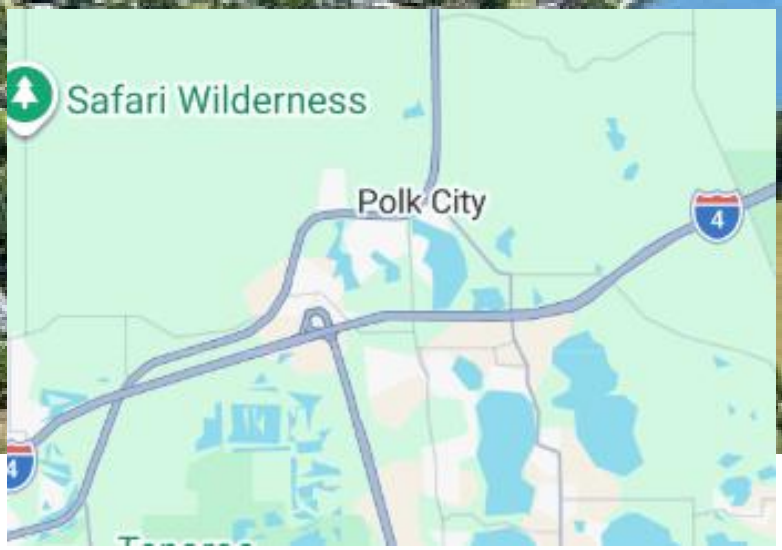
Highlights: Lake Julianna and Lake Mattie access, the elite Elite Cable Park for wakeboarding, and scenic parks.

Frostproof:

Highlights: Located along the southern end of the county, featuring Lake Clinch and Lake Reedy for peaceful, pristine fishing lifestyles.

Not sure which community fits your lifestyle? Turn the page to compare them side by side — or reach out and let's find your perfect match together.





POLK CITY

20 Minutes to Lakeland | 40 Minutes to Orlando | 50 Minutes to Tampa

Nestled in northern Polk County, Polk City offers the ultimate escape for those seeking a laid-back, rural lake lifestyle. Surrounded by beautiful lakes like Lake Madison and Lake Van, and bordering the vast Green Swamp Wilderness preserve, Polk City delivers space, tranquility, and natural beauty.

Lifestyle

- *• Private dock living and serene kayaking/boating*
- *Expansive lots, horse properties, and custom waterfront single-family homes*

Best For

- *Active retirees*
- *Buyers seeking extra land, privacy, and quiet water frontage*
- *Outdoor lovers & nature enthusiasts*

Don't Miss

- *Sunset boat rides on Lake Madison*
- *Summer festivals & concerts*
- *Van Fleet State Trailhead*

Population

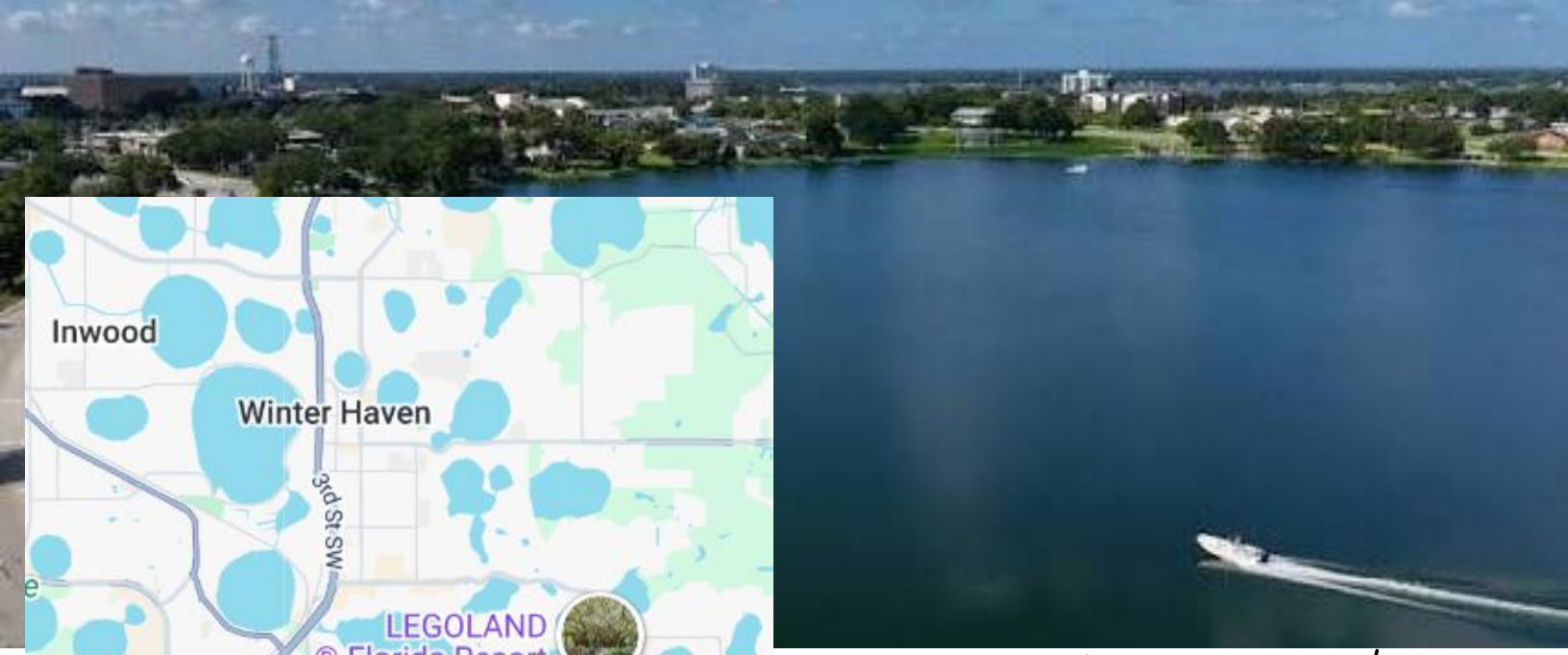
3,159

Avg. Home Price

$300,000

5 mile radius





Winter Haven

25 Minutes to Lakeland | 45 Minutes to Disney / Orlando

Known worldwide as the Water Ski Capital, Winter Haven is defined by its famous Chain of Lakes. With 24 lakes connected by navigable canals on the Northern Chain and 16 on the Southern Chain, you can boat straight from your dock to lakeside restaurants, parks, and downtown attractions.

Lifestyle

- *Canal-connected boating & dock-and-dine lifestyle*
- *Waterskiing, wakeboarding, and boat parades*
- *Revitalized downtown with craft breweries, boutiques, and dining*

Best For

- *• Active boaters & watersports families*
- *• Social, on-the-go lake residents*
- *• Resort-style year-round living*

Don't Miss

- *Boating to waterfront restaurants (e.g., Harborside, Tanner's)*
- *Central Park in Downtown Winter Haven*

Population

64,648

Avg. Home Price

$294,600

33 mile radius





Lakeland

35 Minutes to Tampa | 55 Minutes to Orlando

As the largest city in Polk County, Lakeland combines urban sophistication with timeless lakefront beauty. Famous for its iconic lakes right in the heart of town—complete with resident swans—Lakeland features walkable brick streets, historic architecture, and premier waterfront homes.

Lifestyle

- *Walking/jogging around Lake Hollingsworth's 3-mile paved loop*
- *Downtown farmers markets, art museums, and fine dining*
- *Historic lakefront districts*

Best For

- *Retirees /downsizers/ growing families*
- *Active walkers and cultural enthusiasts*
- *Waterfront enthusiasts*

Don't Miss

- *Feeding the swans at Lake Morton*
- *Hollis Garden and Lake Mirror Promenade*

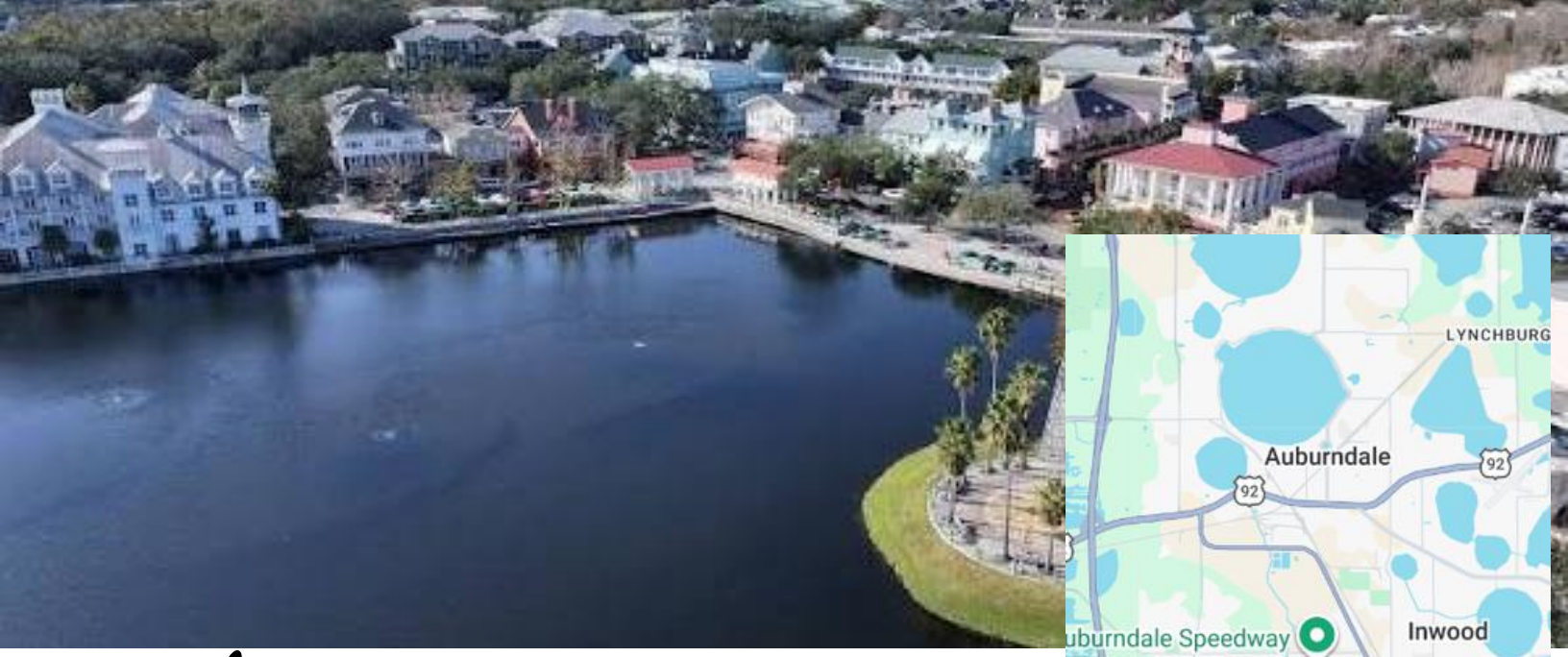
Frank Lloyd Wright architecture at Florida Southern College

Population
128,276

Avg. Home Price
$305,000

67 mile radius





Auburndale

15 Minutes to Lakeland | 40 Minutes to Orlando

Auburndale is an energetic community located right in central Polk County. It offers a wonderful blend of scenic freshwater lakes and high-energy sports recreation, making it a standout choice for active households and outdoor lovers.

Lifestyle

- *Water skiing and wakeboarding on pristine, open freshwater lakes*
- *Paved trail biking along the TECO Auburndale Trail*
- *Family sports complexes and community lake parks*

Best For

- *Watersports enthusiasts & young families*
- *Buyers seeking convenient access to both Orlando and Tampa*
- *Active outdoor lifestyles*

Don't Miss

- *Elite Cable Park (premier wakeboard and cable park)*
- *Lake Ariana Park & Boat Ramp*
- *Downtown Auburndale Park & City Plaza*

Population
22,590

Avg. Home Price
$385,500

14 mile radius





Lake Wales & Frostproof

Southeast Polk County | 45 Minutes to Lakeland

Located along the historic Lake Wales Ridge, this area features elevated rolling terrain, citrus groves, and vast, deep freshwater lakes. It offers a serene, authentic Florida atmosphere far away from urban hustle.

Lifestyle

- *• World-class trophy bass fishing*
- *Lakeside trails and scenic elevation changes*
- *Historic preservation and nature parks*

Best For

- *Avid fishermen & nature photography lovers*
- *Retirees seeking peaceful, uninterrupted lake views*
- *Rustic, spacious Florida living*

Don't Miss

- *Historic Bok Tower Gardens & Singing Tower*
- *Lake Wailes Park loop*
- *Camp Mack, a Guy Harvey Lodge*

Population

19,025 & 3,580

Avg. Home Price

$250,740 & $122,000

20 miles radius



Activities & Lifestyle

Where water life is found in the heart of Florida not on the coast!



POPULAR WATER ACTIVITIES:

- **Freshwater Fishing:** Polk County is globally renowned for trophy Largemouth Bass. Lakes like Walk-in-Water, Lake Tohopekaliga access, and the Winter Haven Chain offer top-tier angling.
- **Waterskiing & Wakeboarding**: Smooth morning waters on Lake Van, Lake Julianna, and Lake Eloise make this region a water-skier's paradise.
- **Pontoon Cruising & Dock-and-Dine**: Navigate canal locks in Winter Haven to pull right up to waterfront restaurants for lunch or sunset cocktails.
- **Kayaking & Paddleboarding**: Explore quiet cypress-lined coves and natural wetlands in the Green Swamp or around Lake Wales.



POLK COUNTY LAKE RULES & BOATING SAFETY:

- **Vessel Registration & Licensing:** Anyone operating a motorized vessel (including jet skis) must follow Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regulations.
- **Idle Speed / No Wake Zones**: Strictly enforced in canals, near bridges, public boat ramps, and within 100 feet of docks or anchored boats.
- **Life Jackets (PFDs)**: Must have one wearable USCG-approved life jacket for each person on board. Children under 6 MUST wear a PFD at all times while the vessel is underway.
- **Navigating Canal Locks**: On the Winter Haven Chain, follow lock operator signals and enter at idle speed.



Lake Living: Essential "Don't Forget" Checklist

LAKE LIVING: ESSENTIAL "DON'T FORGET" CHECKLIST









Local Exploration & Must-Visits

Discover Your Go-To Coffee & Breakfast Spot: Find your favorite local "mom-and-pop" cafe or bakery for quick morning runs.

Explore the Nearest Farmer's Market: Check out weekend markets for fresh local produce, artisan foods, and community vibes.

Locate the Best Local Parks & Trails: Find nearby green spaces, dog parks, or walking paths for weekend downtime.

Bookmark Essential Everyday Services: Pick out your new go-to grocery store, pharmacy, hardware store, and emergency vet clinic.

Find Your New Favorite Dinner Spot: Pick a cozy local restaurant to celebrate surviving moving week!

Water Safety & Florida Wildlife Etiquette

Living on freshwater means sharing the ecosystem safely with native wildlife:

The Golden Rule for Pets & Kids: Keep a safe distance (10–15+ feet) from the shoreline edge, especially during dusk and dawn. Never feed any wildlife.

Swimming Guidelines: Stick to designated swim areas or open, clear water during peak daylight hours. Avoid swimming in murky water or vegetated shorelines.

Life Jackets & Safety Gear: Ensure you have USCG-approved life jackets for every passenger on board (plus a throwable flotation device and a whistle/horn on motorized vessels).

Wildlife Courtesy & Safety:

Keep dog leases secure during early morning and evening walks near water bodies or wooded areas.

Never feed local wildlife (alligators, sandhill cranes, raccoons, etc.)—it habituates them to human presence.

Secure Waste & Outdoor Storage: Keep trash cans secured until collection morning to prevent attracting nighttime visitors (bears, raccoons, or neighborhood strays).

Pool & Water Safety Rules: If you have a pool or live near lakes/retention ponds, verify perimeter fencing or child-safety alarms are active and fully operational.

Health Care & Essential Services

Peace of Mind for You and Your Family

For many relocating to Polk County, peace of mind comes down to accessible, high-quality care and municipal services. Polk County boasts robust healthcare networks and efficient services:



HOSPITALS & HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS:

- **Lakeland Regional Health**: Top-tier medical center and Level II Trauma Center serving the broader region.
- **BayCare (Winter Haven Hospital & Bartow Regional)**: Comprehensive hospital facilities, heart centers, and specialized care.
- **AdventHealth (Heart of Florida & Lake Wales**): Convenient facilities along the I-4 corridor and southern Polk County.
- **Urgent Care & Medical Clinics:** Extensive network of BayCare Urgent Care, Florida Coastal, and Watson Clinic locations across Lakeland, Polk City, and Winter Haven.



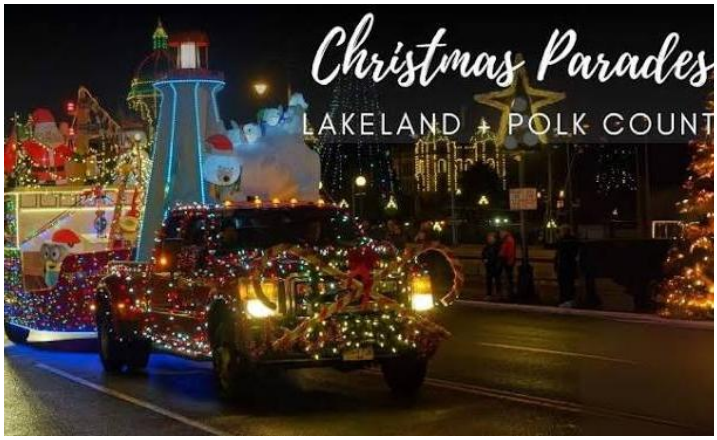
EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS:

- **Grocery & Retail**: Publix Super Markets (headquartered in Lakeland, serving every neighborhood!), Target, Walmart, and local farm stands.
- **Utilities & Services:** TECO Energy, Duke Energy, Polk County Utilities, and city-specific water services.
- **Emergency Services**: Polk County Sheriff's Office, local municipal police departments, and Polk County Fire Rescue.



Seasons On the Lake









Life in Central Florida follows a sunny, comfortable rhythm all year long.

One of the most common questions I hear is, "But what's it like in the winter?" The honest answer: Polk County is beautiful in every season. Life here doesn't pause when “summer” ends in the Sunshine State!

Fall (Sept – Nov): Warm days, cooling evenings, and ideal conditions for fishing tournaments and outdoor lake dining. The humidity drops, making dockside sunsets spectacular.

Winter (Dec – Feb): Mild, dry, and sunny. Perfectly clear days make winter the prime season for boating, golfing, and kayaking without the summer heat.

Spring (March – May): Peak outdoor season! Warm breezes, blooming flora, active lake life, and ideal conditions for water skiing and festivals.

Summer (June – Aug): Sunshine, warm water, and afternoon lake showers. Long sunny days are spent anchored at sandbars, jet skiing, or relaxing by the pool and lake dock.

Here, the seasons are embraced, your lifestyle doesn’t change it continues, an invitation to be outdoors on the water anytime of the year!

Your Next Chapter Starts Here



Whether you're planning to move next month or next year, I'd love to help you find the community — and the life — that fits you best. No pressure, no rush. Just honest guidance from someone who knows Polk County personally - Your Lakefront Lady!

How I Can Help?

✓Complimentary Services ✓ Personalized relocation consultation ✓ Custom lake & neighborhood comparison tailored to your boating/lifestyle needs ✓ Trusted local vendor & contractor referrals (dock builders, seawall inspectors, marine services) ✓ lifestyle community information ✓ A customized home search, tailored to you!

Scan the QR code to get started

Let's connect!

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