

FALL/WINTER 2019

# HAWWEATERS

## Guide



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# Mining for North Channel walleye gold: A guide

by The Ontario  
Fishing Guys

MANITOULIN—For many, fall conjures up images of falling leaves, turkey dinners and pumpkin spice lattes, but for the Ontario Fishing Guys it only means one thing: the walleye bite is about to heat up. If you are the angler who winterizes your boat at the first sign of a falling leaf, do yourself a favour, hold off on the boat storage because the walleye are putting their feed bags on.

## What is lake turnover?

You might have read or heard anglers talking about lake turnover and not know what they are referring to or how it is important to fishing.

Throughout the summer months the water is in three basic layers with the warm water (high oxygen levels) at the top, the small middle layer called the thermocline (where oxygen levels quickly dissipate) and the cold water (low oxygen levels) at the bottom.

As the cold weather sets in, the surface water begins to cool and therefore becomes denser causing it to sink in the water column. This causes the bottom layer to rise, hence turning over the



Dave Patterson of the Ontario Fishing Guys with a fresh North Channel haul.



Aaron Case is all smiles with his walleye spoils.

water layers. The turnover causes the oxygen levels to even out through the water column.

## What does this mean for walleye fishing?

Walleye are fish of habits and will never be found far from food. It can be tough fishing early in the fall when the turnover is happening, as the walleye scatter from their normal summer haunts, but good catches can still be had.

Early on in the fall walleye can be found in areas that have moving water or a slack zone that is just off the current. Fishing rock shoals that transition from shallow to deeper water and weed breaks will produce solid catches.

When we are out chasing fall gold, we look more for bait than anything else. If you find the bait, the walleye will not be far away.

Once the turnover has happened this is when the fishing truly heats up. The big elusive walleye that anglers dream about put on the feed bags as they prepare for the winter. Do not be afraid to fish deep; with the oxygen levels stable throughout the water column the big  
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