



Using the Secchi Disk

For this test, you will be using a device called a SECCHI DISK. This is a very simple tool with a white and black disk attached to a rope with markings every 1.5 feet (18 inches). To use the disk, proceed as follows:

1. Lower the disk slowly into the water.
2. Observe the disk until it disappears from view.
3. Raise the disk ever so slightly back into view. As soon as the disk is visible again, mark this depth on the line.
4. This is known as the “Secchi Depth.”

The Secchi Depth gives scientists an idea of how far light can travel into the water column, which is important for rooted grasses on the bottom of the Bay that need sunlight to survive.

