

YOUR LAWN – IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT YOU

Everyone enjoys the serenity of a nice lawn. You need to know that your landscaping practices can directly affect our waterways. Sometimes in our zest to create the most attractive lawn, we over-use or misuse lawn and garden fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. More is not necessarily better. When it rains, lawn chemicals--even organic ones--can run off our yards and into the creek, then into the Delaware River, which drains into the ocean. Before reaching the ocean, these chemicals can affect drinking water quality and ruin the environment for aquatic critters all along the way. Once these chemicals reach the ocean, they can cause seafood contamination and dead zones, areas in the ocean with little or no oxygen. Few organisms can survive without oxygen.



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CARING FOR YOUR LAWN

SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE WATERWAYS

Get your soil tested A majority of homeowners fertilize their lawns, but only 10-20% know if it's even necessary.

When using fertilizer, use it sparingly Lawns usually don't need as much fertilizer as you think, or need applications as often as you might think.

Don't apply fertilizer before rain storms, and never apply to frozen ground A lot of the chemicals will be washed away in storm water and wind up in our waterways.

Don't fertilize your sidewalk and driveways Keeping fertilizer off of paved surfaces helps prevent it from being washed into the storm drains.

Reduce your lawn area and go native By increasing lawn area with natural vegetation including trees, deep roots help keep the soil in place. Lawns don't have deep roots, so more soil, chemicals and nutrients from lawns run off into streams. Native vegetation tends to have deeper roots that counteract erosion.

Mow high: 3 inches Help your grass develop deep roots. Your lawn will require less water, be more disease resistant, weeds will have a harder time germinating, and tall grass holds up better in heat because the extra cover shades the roots.

Let grass clippings lay Naturally fertilizes your lawn.
