

Why Phosphorus Matters...

Storm water pollution comes from a variety of sources. The single largest contaminant in our waterways today is sediment (U.S. EPA).



There are many sorts of land uses which contribute to erosion and sedimentation but the greatest loss is earth-moving during the course of development without proper soil and water protection.

Phosphorus and nitrogen are factors which promote algae growth. Other factors are sunlight, warm weather, low turbulence, or cloudy water with low light levels.

Phosphorus is a limiting factor, which is to say that the growth of algae is more dependent on the amount of available phosphorus.

What most lawn owners don't know is that the majority of Indiana soils already contain enough phosphorus for a healthy lawn, so most lawns don't need the extra food. The excess phosphorus in lawn fertilizer runs off with the storm water across lawns, roads and woods into streams and ditches, and eventually into reservoirs and lakes.

courtesy of the
**Allen County Partnership
for Water Quality**

The solution to phosphorus runoff is to control the source.



Using phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer is one easy way anyone can contribute to better water quality—regardless of where you live.

- Curb inlet protection
- Drop inlet protection
- Soil salvage and utilization



Indiana Department of Environmental Management



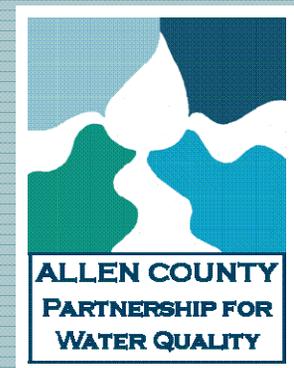
3718 New Vision Dr.
Fort Wayne, IN 46845
Phone: 260.484.5848 x 111
Fax: 260.484.5080
E-mail: matt.jones@one.usda.org

ACPWQ



What you should know about...

Fertilizer



You Are the Solution to Storm Water Pollution!

FERTILIZER APPLICATION

Methods to Reduce Fertilizer Runoff

- Apply fertilizer only to target the desirable plants.
- Reduce excess by applying fertilizers at the rate of plant uptake.
- Apply small quantities of fertilizer several times during the growing season.
- Use natural, organic or slow release organic fertilizers.
- Grass clippings from mowing are full of nutrients; use a mulching mower and cut no more than the top third of the grass.
- Always read directions and follow them. It is better to know your soil test results.

- Most fertilizer applied on windy days or before a storm event is lost- save your time and money.

- Any fertilizer on driveways, sidewalks, and streets can wash into storm water drains.

- Above all, apply fertilizer carefully. Avoid lakes, streams or ponds.



Look for the zero in the middle for no phosphorus fertilizer

If we can all work toward knowing the needs of our soil better, our water quality will improve as a result.

There has been a lot of attention on the amount of algae appearing in our lakes, ponds and reservoirs. The amount of excess phosphorus and nitrogen from fertilizers reaching our waterways is what leads to most of these “blooms.” While there is no doubt that the largest single user of fertilizers is the agricultural community, there is also another community that is a large contributor - the urban and suburban landowner.

Without realizing it, a lot of this fertilizer is washed from lawns into the storm drains without treatment. This leads to an overabundance of nutrients in the waterways and causes the algae to grow. In many ways, we are limiting our own enjoyment of the lakes, ponds and reservoirs.

This also impairs the water quality when we draw from the rivers and reservoirs for our drinking water. The bigger question is - *why would we add to the amount of contamination that we pay water utility rates to clean?*



Photo: T. Bridgeman/
Univ. of Toledo



Anyone for a swim?

Unlike agricultural application, the city landscape is a lot of land divided into small parcels under the care of many thousands of individuals. Each of these individuals has a different idea on how their land is used and how to achieve that perceived “look.”

Without much regard to cost, labor, weather or direction these landowners tend to overuse chemicals.

More likely than not, all the treatments being applied are done without knowing their soil needs.



Allowing pet waste to sit on your lawn adds a lot of e. Coli and excessive nutrients in our waterways.

ACPWQ www.acwater.org

3718 New Vision Dr.
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

Phone: 260.484.5848 x 111

Fax: 260.484.5080

E-mail: matt.jones@one.usda.org

