

**WHEN YOU'RE FERTILIZING THE LAWN,
REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT JUST
FERTILIZING THE LAWN.**



You fertilize the lawn. Then it rains. The rain washes the fertilizer along the curb, into the storm drain, and directly into our lakes, streams and into coastal waters including the Chesapeake Bay. This causes algae to grow, which uses up oxygen that fish need to survive. So if you fertilize, please follow directions and use sparingly.

If you have questions regarding storm water, please contact your municipality or Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Regional Office. For general questions, you may also contact DEP's Bureau of Water Management at (717) 772-5661 or visit www.dep.state.pa.us. Thanks to the Washington State Water Quality Consortium for permission to adapt and use this poster.

YARD CARE

Treat with care; Right dose at the right time.

Clean water is important to all of us. It's up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years, sources of water pollution, like industrial wastes from factories, have been greatly reduced. Now, most water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil; fertilizers from farms, lawns and gardens; and failing septic tanks. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too. And that adds up to a **POLLUTION SOLUTION!**

Why do we need clean water?

Having clean water is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean water provides recreation and commercial opportunities, fish habitat and drinking water. It also adds beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water and all of us have a role in getting and keeping our lakes, rivers, and ground waters clean.

What's the problem with fertilizing your lawn?

Many people use fertilizers, weed killers and pesticides to enhance their yards and gardens. But If you use too much of these products or apply them at the wrong time, stormwater runoff can easily carry them from your lawn or garden into storm drains and ditches. From there, they can end up in lakes and streams.

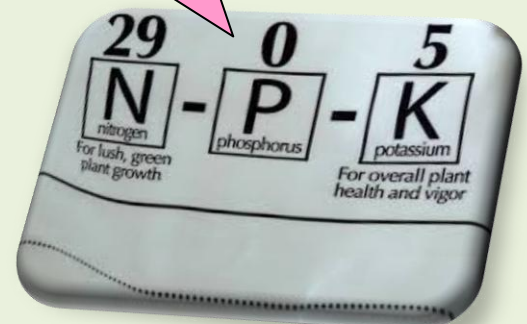
Weed killers and pesticides are designed to kill plants and animals that are considered pests. However, when they get into our waters, they can kill plants and animals that are not a problem. Fish and amphibians are vulnerable to these chemicals.

Like in the garden, fertilizer in lakes and streams makes plants grow. But too much algae and other aquatic plant growth can make boating, fishing and swimming unpleasant. What's more, as the algae and other plants decay, they use up the oxygen in the water that fish and other aquatic life need. Lawn and garden care doesn't have to be a problem.

What will you do to help?

- Read the label. Follow the instructions.
- Use fertilizer sparingly. Many plants don't need as much as you might think. Too much can even harm them. Also, roots, leaves and fruits need different nutrients. Test your soil to find the right dose and type to match your plants' needs.
- Use Phosphorus free fertilizer.
- Don't treat your lawn or garden right before a rainstorm.
- Use slow-release fertilizers and other more environmentally friendly products.
- Try non-chemical alternatives. Use compost. Plant companion plants that deter pests. Pull weeds by hand. Use mulch. Trade lawn for native groundcover or shrubs.
- Get expert advice about lawn and garden products from Master Gardeners at <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/master-gardener/counties/york>

The middle number is the Phosphorus content. Look for "0"!



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