

Storm Water Pollution Prevention:

Fertilizers and Pesticides

Fertilizer helps things grow, but when it gets in water, it helps algae grow. Algae blooms can cause major problems in waterways because they use up oxygen needed by other river critters.

Pesticides, intended to kill bugs around our homes, also damage the important ecosystems that live in creeks, rivers, lakes, and the ocean. Additionally, pesticides can cause a health threat to humans who swim or play in waterbodies which receive storm water discharges.



Typically, these wastes enter the drainage system in one of three ways:

1. They have been stored improperly on the ground and washed into the storm drains by rain,
2. Someone has illegally dumped them directly into the drains,
3. Or these pollutants enter the storm drain system when they are overapplied to the land surface and then washed into the storm drain by rain.

What you can do to help:

Fertilize sparingly! If you must fertilize, September is the best month. If you want to fertilize more than once, do not fertilize in the spring until you have mowed the lawn three times.



Avoid using combination fertilizer/pesticide products. Hand pick weeds when possible, and if you must treat weeds or insects with pesticides, spot treat them rather than dousing the entire lawn.

Let your grass grow. The ideal length depends upon the type, but the general rule of thumb is to never cut more than a third of the blade. And when you cut it, leave the grass clippings on the lawn. It's the best kind of fertilizer!

Do not over-water your lawn. Excess water will simply run off into the street and wash away pesticides and fertilizers before they have had a chance to be effective.

Consider letting your lawn go dormant, if there's a drought. It will come back in the fall.

**Report Illegal Discharges to the
Storm Drain System Supervisor**

801-785-2941

12 STEP STORM DRAIN AWARENESS PROGRAM

