Leave grass clippings on the lawn.
A healthy, established lawn with recycled grass clippings needs little or no additional phosphorus fertilizer. Yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings, and weeds can also be composted. Grass clippings should never be blown back into the street or curb line.

Mow turf grass at appropriate heights.
Mow turfgrass at the height of 2-3" and never remove more than 1/3 of the leaf.

Avoid overwatering.
Overwatering isn't healthy for your lawn. The excess runoff also carries pollution into the storm drainage system. Check with the local water department or county extension service for watering tips. Adjust sprinkler heads to ensure they are watering only plants and not hard surfaces.

Use alternatives to insecticides and pesticides.
Consider using non-chemical methods for controlling pests. Ask your lawn care company if they offer Integrated Pest Management (IPM) services as an alternative to harmful chemicals.

Store your lawn and garden chemicals properly
Store fertilizers, herbicides, and gasoline in a secure, covered area to prevent accidental poisonings or contamination of runoff.

Dispose of lawn and garden chemicals properly.
Use your local recycling center or take advantage of local household chemical round-ups. Buy only what you need. Never pour chemicals into the storm drains — it's illegal and it pollutes the water.

Landscape or mulch bare areas.
Rain, snow melt, and wind can erode exposed soil. Soil washed into the storm drains pollutes our waterways with sediment.

Landscape with native and xeriscape plants.
Plant alternatives to bluegrass lawns, such as buffalo grass. This not only conserves water but lowers fertilizer and pesticide requirements. Native plants are better adapted to our climate and more capable of surviving without chemical assistance.

Do your part to keep our water clean!

Dumping liquid or solid waste into a storm drain or creek is a crime. If you see illegal dumping, report it!

One Thing Is CLEAR
Cooperative for Local Environmental Awareness & Responsibility
Our creeks, rivers & lakes depend on you.

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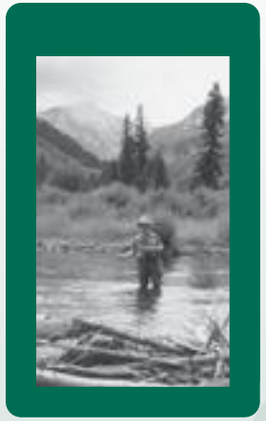
CLEAR CHOICES FOR CLEAN WATER

Caring for Your Lawn and Garden



Clean water – we need it to survive

Rivers, streams, creeks, ponds, lakes, reservoirs — the metro area's waterways are some of our most precious resources. They provide drinking water, recreation, and wildlife habitat — but only if the water remains clean and unpolluted.

This brochure offers ways to care for your lawn and garden that will help prevent water pollution and keep our streams, rivers, and lakes clear and clean.

Not all pollution is intentional

We all need to do our part to protect local waterways from pollution. What you may not realize is that much of the pollution is unintentional, caused by the things that we do everyday — at work, at home, at play.

The gutter in the street outside your home carries water into a network of storm drains that lead straight to local creeks and rivers. Storm drains are separate from the sanitary sewer system (which handles wastewater from your sinks, tubs, and toilets). Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not treated at a sewage treatment plant. Stormwater goes directly from the storm drainage system into local creeks and rivers.

Anything on the sidewalks and streets such as excess fertilizer, grass clippings, leaves, pet waste, or trash is carried away by runoff or snowmelt and ends up in storm drains, where it flows into rivers, lakes, and streams.

What you do makes a difference!

You might not think that you can help solve the problem, but you can. Lawn and garden chemicals such as insecticides, pesticides, and fertilizers contaminate the stormwater if used improperly. Soil in bare areas can be washed away during heavy rains, polluting our water with sediment.

A healthy lawn helps water quality

Caring for your lawn and garden properly protects water quality and conserves water resources. Research has shown that healthy lawns:

- Improve water quality
- Prevent soil erosion
- Reduce air pollution
- Provide wildlife habitat

Caring for your lawn and garden

Amend soils.

Soil amendments mixed into the soil increase water and nutrient holding capacities which reduce runoff and promote a healthy root system.

Apply fertilizer sparingly and at the right time.

Excess fertilizer washes off and ends up in stormwater. Be sure to apply fertilizer, according to manufacturer guidelines, in early October before the grass goes dormant. Never apply fertilizers before a storm event. Sweep fertilizer from sidewalks or driveways back into lawn areas, not into the street.