

You are fertilizing more than your grass.

The storm drain in your street is a direct link to our lakes and rivers. The choices you make when caring for your lawn directly affect water quality.

A common cause of lake and river pollution is phosphorus runoff. In response to this, many Twin Cities communities have laws restricting phosphorus fertilizer use. Though phosphorus is important for grass growth, levels in most Twin Cities' lawns are naturally high and do not require supplementation.

Phosphorus turns lakes and rivers green. Phosphorus stimulates the growth of algae in lakes and rivers. This crowds out other water plants and reduces oxygen available to fish. The result is unattractive, foul-smelling water that is bad for fish, wildlife, and humans.

Nitrogen, not phosphorus, greens up grass. Phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer still contains nitrogen, the plant nutrient that greens up grass.

To keep our lakes and rivers healthy, we need to manage phosphorus carefully. Read on to learn how you can reduce phosphorus runoff from lawn fertilizers and other sources!

Minneapolis Lawn Fertilizer Ordinance Summary

The use lawn of fertilizers containing phosphorus is not permitted in the City of Minneapolis, except as noted below.

- The use of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus is permitted on newly established (seed or sod) lawn areas during the first growing season.
- The use of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus is permitted if a soil test confirms that your lawn area is below recommended levels for phosphorus established by the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

For more information on the ordinance, please call Minneapolis Environmental Management at 612-673-5885. The full text of the Lawn Fertilizer ordinance, Title 3 - Chapter 55, can be found at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cityhall/laws/ordinances.

More information on lawn care and soil testing from the University of Minnesota can be found by calling the Yard & Garden line at 612-624-4771 or at www.extension.umn.edu.

This information is brought to you by:



THINK CLEAN WATER

GREEN UP YOUR LAWN NOT YOUR LAKES AND RIVERS

Anything that enters a storm drain goes directly to a local lake or river.

It does not go to a waste water treatment facility.

Do you know you live on waterfront property? You do if there is a storm drain nearby! Storm drains carry runoff water directly to lakes and rivers. Whatever washes off your yard and street runs directly into these waters. That includes lawn fertilizer, grass clippings, pet waste, and tree leaves and seeds—all sources of phosphorus, the plant nutrient that turns lakes and rivers green with algae.

Keep your runoff clean!

Keep our lakes and rivers clean!

REMOVE LEAVES FROM THE STREET

- Rake leaves, seeds and grass clippings out of the street and gutter.
- Compost on site, bag for collection, or take to community compost program.



PREVENT EROSION

- Phosphorus attaches to soil. Keep soil from washing into the street.

FERTILIZE THE LAWN, NOT THE LAKES AND RIVERS

- Choose a zero-phosphorus fertilizer. The majority of Twin Cities' lawns are naturally high in phosphorus and will remain healthy without adding more.
- If you think your lawn needs phosphorus, test your soil first. For information call INFO-U at 612-624-2200, message 468 or visit www.extension.umn.edu.
- Sweep spilled fertilizer off paved surfaces.
- Remember, compost and manure contain phosphorus too.



LEAVES END UP IN THE STORM SEWER...

FERTILIZER

LAWN AND PAVEMENT

STORM SEWER

LAKES AND RIVERS

ANIMAL WASTES END UP IN THE STORM SEWER...

GRASS CLIPPINGS END UP IN THE STORM SEWER...

CLEAN UP AFTER PETS

- Scoop the poop. Pet waste contains phosphorus as well as harmful bacteria.
- Don't feed the geese.



KEEP THE PAVEMENT CLEAN

Sweep up grass clippings and fertilizer from driveways, sidewalks, and streets.

