

# Lawn Care Tips That Work

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**M**aking changes in the way we care for our lawns goes a long way in protecting water quality. Protecting water quality goes a long way in protecting wetlands, lakes, and our environment. Make these easy changes in lawn care to make large changes in local water quality.

- Test your soil.
- Find out what nutrients you may or may not need to add for a healthy lawn.
- Use no phosphorus fertilizer.
- The "P" on the NPK rating on a bag of fertilizer indicates the amount of phosphorus. Chose ratings of zero.
- Keep fertilizer, grass clippings, and leaves off of driveways and streets.



**You only need to fertilize once in the fall when grass is growing slowly.**

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- When these things are left on hard surfaces, they wash off into storm drains and cause "green" lakes.
- Apply fertilizer at the correct rate.

- This is a case of more is not better. Be sure your spreader is set correctly.
  - Fertilize in the fall.
  - Grass clippings left on the lawn, or "mulched", act as a fertilizer in the summer. Therefore, you only need to fertilize once in the fall when the grass is growing slowly.
  - Maintain a healthy lawn.
  - Mow grass to a height of 2-3 inches; over seed in spring and fall; and aerate and dethatch in the fall. A healthy lawn needs less chemical maintenance.
  - Don't dump leftovers in the storm drains or streets.
  - Finished your application of fertilizer with a little left over? Save it until next time. Runoff in storm drains goes directly to local lakes, not a treatment facility.
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