

HOW TO PREVENT POLLUTION FROM LAWNS

Fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, grass clippings, leaves, pet waste, and litter all contribute to the pollution of our waterways. By implementing proper application, clean up, and waste management practices the introduction of these pollutants to our waterways can be avoided.

Lawn chemicals and related pollutants wash into storm drain systems and increase toxic levels, which harm birds, fish, and other aquatic life, cause beach closures, and impair our drinking water supplies. Floating materials also pollute our lakes and streams and reduce natural beauty of our waterways. This results in a negative impact on aesthetics of our natural resources and tourism/recreation opportunities.



STORMWATER POLLUTION

WHAT IS STORMWATER?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas, bare soil, and sloped lawns. As it flows, stormwater runoff collects and transports soil, animal waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and grease, debris and other pollutants.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Stormwater is not treated. Rain and snowmelt wash pollutants from streets, construction sites, and land into storm sewers and ditches. Eventually, the storm sewers and ditches empty the polluted water directly into lakes, rivers, and streams with no treatment. This is known as **Stormwater Pollution**. Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

Fortunately, stormwater pollution can be prevented or minimized by implementing **Best Management Practices** which are procedures or activities that reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater.

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STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

LANDSCAPERS AND LAWN MAINTENANCE BUSINESSES



POLLUTANT SOURCES

The following are potential sources of pollution from the lawn service industry:

- Grass clippings
- Yard waste
- Vehicle cleaning
- Chemical application, storage, and disposal

Pollutants include:

- Nitrogen & Phosphorus
- Herbicides & Pesticides
- Grass Clippings & Leaves
- Trash & Litter

POLLUTION PREVENTION

Consider implementing some of these effective pollution prevention practices:

- Dispose of chemicals as directed on the product package
- Reduce stormwater flows across driveways and redirect flow into vegetation
- Use dry methods (broom) to clean pavement
- Wash equipment near grassy areas
- Recycle and reuse waste products
- Provide employee training for good housekeeping practices

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

Hazardous Waste

- Store all hazardous chemicals under a lid, roof, or cover of some sort
- Keep all hazardous chemicals in a plastic bin with sides to contain any leaks, drips, or spills
- Use water-tight containers and keep lids closed
- Dispose of any chemicals according to the directions on the package
- Clean spills up immediately

Equipment Cleaning

- Use a broom or brush to remove debris from equipment
- Wash equipment in grassy areas or where water will flow into grassy areas
- DO NOT wash or dump wash water in parking lots, streets, alleys, or on sidewalks

On the Job

- Collect and dispose of trash in a closed container
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn
- Mow over leaves and leave debris on the lawn
- Sweep all clippings off of paved areas back onto the lawn
- Hand pick or spot-treat weeds
- Monitor watering systems for leaks, broken equipment, overwatering
- Have soil tested before fertilizing
- Do not apply chemicals when rain is forecasted in the next 48 hours



RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

General

- Contain equipment wash water. DO NOT dispose of in the gutter, alley, or street.
- Practice good housekeeping while on the job

Spill Clean-Up

- Develop and maintain a spill response plan
- Have a spill kit on hand and easily accessible
- Clean up leaks and drips
- Use dry methods for spill clean-up:
 - Grab a broom, not the hose
 - Use absorbent materials like cat litter, sand, and sawdust