

NEWS RELEASE

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Fertilize Your Lawn if You Must, But Don't Fertilize the Water

The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) and the Stormwater Coalition remind people that fertilizer should be applied to lawns sparingly and carefully. And it should stay on your lawn and not get into the storm sewer system where it affects our streams and lakes.

A little care will save you money and will also protect streams and lakes.

First, use only as much fertilizer as you need. A simple soil test will tell you if you need to add nutrients. If you do want to fertilize, use a no- or low-phosphorus fertilizer, and select a slow release fertilizer where at least half of the nitrogen is water insoluble.

Then, don't let your fertilizer wash away into the storm sewers where it will end up in streams and lakes. If we get a rain right after you fertilize, you'll watch your investment flow right to the storm sewers, and fertilizer does not belong in the water supply. Do use a broom to sweep excess or spilled fertilizer off the sidewalks and back onto your lawn, don't use a hose that will wash fertilizer into the street and then into sewers.

Excess amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus can cause blooms of algae in our lakes and streams. Some algae is natural and is part of the food chain, but overgrowth of algae forms mats of goo that clog water inlets and block sunlight to the water. And as algae decay they use up oxygen in the water that fish, frogs, and other wildlife need.

There are ways to keep a lawn green and healthy that are 100 percent free and ecologically sound. When you mow, leave the grass at least 3 inches tall, and leave the clippings on the lawn. Grass clippings will quickly breakdown and enrich the soil. You can also make your own organic fertilizer in a home compost bin. Kitchen waste like vegetable peels and eggshells, combined with leaves and grass clippings will create a rich compost that will keep a lawn or garden healthy and growing.

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The Stormwater Coalition is a committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (419.241.9155). The coalition is composed of the following members:

Lucas County (419.213.4500)	Village of Walbridge (419.666.1830)	Sylvania Township (419.882.0031)
Wood County (419.354.9000)	Village of Waterville (419.878.8100)	Washington Township (419.726.6621)
City of Northwood (419.693.9327)	Jerusalem Township (419.836.8921)	Waterville Township (419.878.5176)
City of Oregon (419.698.7047)	Lake Township (419.838.6536)	Association of General Contractors of Northwest Ohio (419.241.3601)
City of Toledo (419.245.1050)	Middleton Township (419.823.1480)	Home Builders Association (419.473.2507)
Village of Haskins (419.823.1911)	Monclova Township (419.865.7862)	Ohio Department of Transportation (419.373.4433)
Village of Holland (419.865.7104)	Perrysburg Township (419.872.8861)	Property Rights Coalition (419.241.4677)
Village of Millbury (419.836.9671)	Spencer Township (419.865.2883)	
Village of Ottawa Hills (419.536.1111)	Springfield Township (419.865.0239)	

