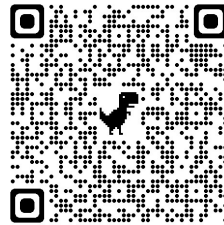


Additional landscaping tips for cleaner water

- Plant native vegetative buffers along streams and drainage pathways
- Compost or mulch leaves and yard debris rather than hauling it away
- Direct downspouts away from driveways or storm drains, or install rain barrels to collect roof runoff
- Maintain septic systems to prevent failure and inspect every 3 years
- Sweep up litter and debris from driveways rather than hosing debris into storm drains
- Mow your lawn so no more than one third of the length of the grass is removed.
- Consider using bricks, flagstone, gravel, and other porous materials instead of pavement or concrete



Find out more about Ridgefield's Stormwater Management Program



Town of Ridgefield
Office of the Town Engineer
400 Main Street
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Clean Water Begins with YOU!



Nutrient Management for a Healthier Lawn and Environment

Why Stormwater Pollution Matters

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, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and grease, debris and other potential pollutants.



What is the Problem?

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 stormwater directly into streams and rivers with no treatment. This is known as stormwater pollution. Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen, which are present in lawn fertilizers, can cause the overgrowth of algae resulting in oxygen depletion in waterways.

Lawn Care Best Management Practices

Cover and contain topsoil and mulch during installation. Wind and rain can transport this material from your yard into nearby lakes and streams, where it reduces aquatic habitat and promotes unwanted weed and algae growth.

Never apply fertilizer before a rainstorm. Heavy rainfall can cause excess fertilizer to flow into the storm sewer system and end up in local lakes and streams. Save time and money by applying a slowrelease fertilizer in the early spring and allowing time for gradual soil infiltration. Plant vegetated filter areas or swales to trap pollutants along streets and driveways

Leave the clippings on the lawn after mowing. This will save time and money and will promote a healthy turf. Grass clippings return organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other nutrients to your lawn, thereby reducing the need for fertilizer applications throughout the summer. Studies have shown that grass recycling reduces the need for fertilizer by 25%. If the grass gets too high, then mow over the clippings to shred and scatter them. Do not drain swimming pools to storm drains.

Limit your use of pesticides. Inappropriate use of pesticides can harm humans, pets, and the environment. Use alternatives (biological controls) whenever possible to tackle problems with weeds and insects. If pesticides are used, carefully follow the recommended timing, frequency, and application rates found on the container.

Lawn fertilizer: Less is more

Lawns require nutrients in fertilizer to stay green and healthy. When too much fertilizer is applied, it can wash off during rain events. The nutrients then flow into storm drains, and into watercourses where they become an energy source for algae and aquatic weeds.

Anything applied to the lawn can potentially contaminate surface and ground waters. However, you can minimize the risk posed to our wetlands and watercourses by following these Best Management Practices:

- Save the environment and money! Measure the surface area of your lawn to determine how much product to apply.
- Don't overload your lawn with nutrients. Apply only in amounts prescribed by the manufacturer. Anything more will damage your lawn and waste your money.
- Use proper spray notification signage and comply with neighbor notification regulations.
- Avoid using chemicals near waterways or storm drains
- Dispose of unused or excess pesticides in accordance with CTDEEP and US EPA regulations
- Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of cleanup materials
- Avoid spraying in windy conditions or when rain is forecast



Consider using spreaders equipped with edge guards to provide additional control and avoid casting fertilizers onto paved surfaces



Reducing turf areas in favor of native plantings will reduce fertilizer and pesticide demands and improve stormwater quality.