

Clean Water, Healthy Lawn

Before you do anything on your lawn, understand that when it rains, water flows off your lawn, over the curb and into the storm drain. Storm drains are connected to the nearest lake, river or stream. This means that anything we put on our lawn—fertilizers, pesticides, weed and feed—can run off our lawn and enter our waters.

There are some simple steps to maintaining a beautiful lawn without harming our waters. It will take some time to apply them all and get results, so be patient!

1. **Test your soil.** Before using fertilizers, test your soil. It is a simple procedure that explains exactly how much fertilizer is actually needed to support the growth of grass. Excess application results in water pollution.
2. **Set realistic expectations.** Is a completely weed free lawn necessary? Realize that weeds are a symptom. The problem could be soil compaction—not a lack of nutrients. Test your soil to treat the problem—not the symptom.
3. **Clean up!** After fertilizing or mowing the lawn, be sure to sweep any leftovers off the pavement and back onto the lawn. Fertilizers and grass clippings will wash into the storm drain and fuel weed and algae growth in local lakes and rivers.

These are just a few of the practices you can use at home for a beautiful lawn that doesn't harm our waters. Visit www.waukeshacounty.gov/cleanwater for more information.