

Lawn and Garden Tips to Reduce Stormwater Pollution!

Healthy Lawns – Healthy Water

Use Zero-Phosphorus Lawn Fertilizer! It's the Law!

Phosphorus runoff poses a threat to water quality. Therefore, under Massachusetts Law, phosphorus-containing fertilizer may only be applied to lawn or non-agricultural turf when:

- a soil test indicates that additional phosphorus is needed for the growth of that lawn or non-agricultural turf; or
- is used for newly established lawn or non-agricultural turf during the first growing season.

Most lawns in Massachusetts do not need additional phosphorus for healthy growth.

Look for the “Zero” to Protect Our Waters



Check the fertilizer bag for a set of three numbers representing the percentage of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K).

Buy the bag with a “0” in the middle: Zero Phosphorus!

When it rains, fertilizer and other pollutants from our lawns are washed into our storm drains where it flows directly – and untreated – into nearby rivers, lakes, and streams.

Phosphorus, commonly found in fertilizers, can cause toxic algae blooms, making it unsafe to swim and killing fish and other aquatic life.

Many people follow the same lawn care routine without really understanding what their lawn needs to be healthy. For example, your soil may already have plenty of nutrients in it for making the grass green and doesn't require additional fertilizer. Unless you or your landscaper is testing the soil, you really don't know what your lawn needs, and you could be using chemicals unnecessarily - and wasting your money.

How to Test Your Soil

Inexpensive soil tests are available through UMass Amherst's Soil Testing Lab. Detailed test results include customized fertilizer recommendations, tailored to the nutrient levels in your specific soil. Soil samples can be mailed or hand delivered.

Additional soil testing information is available at:

www.ag.umass.edu/services/soil-plant-nutrient-testing-laboratory

If your yard requires fertilizer, you can still help reduce water pollution by:

- Using phosphorus-free and/or slow-release fertilizers
- Spot treatment; only apply fertilizer to problem areas, rather than entire yard
- Do not apply before a rain event
- Do not over apply – follow instructions on the bag
- Never store or dump yard waste in or around waterways, wetlands, or storm drains
- Leave grass clippings in your yard as natural fertilizer or compost yard waste in an area away from storm drains and wetlands (minimum 100 ft)
- You can order discounted compost bins and rain barrels through April 19, 2020! For additional information, visit: www.envioworld.us/chelmsford

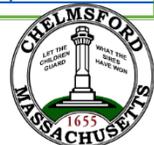
Please... don't feed waterfowl.



REGULAR FEEDING CAN CAUSE:

- Poor nutrition
- Spread of disease
- Unnatural behavior
- Pollution
- Overcrowding
- Delayed migration

Many people enjoy feeding waterfowl, but the effects of this seemingly generous act can be harmful. If you care about waterfowl, please stop feeding them, allow them to return to their natural habits.



FREE Leaf and Yard Waste Drop-Off Events!

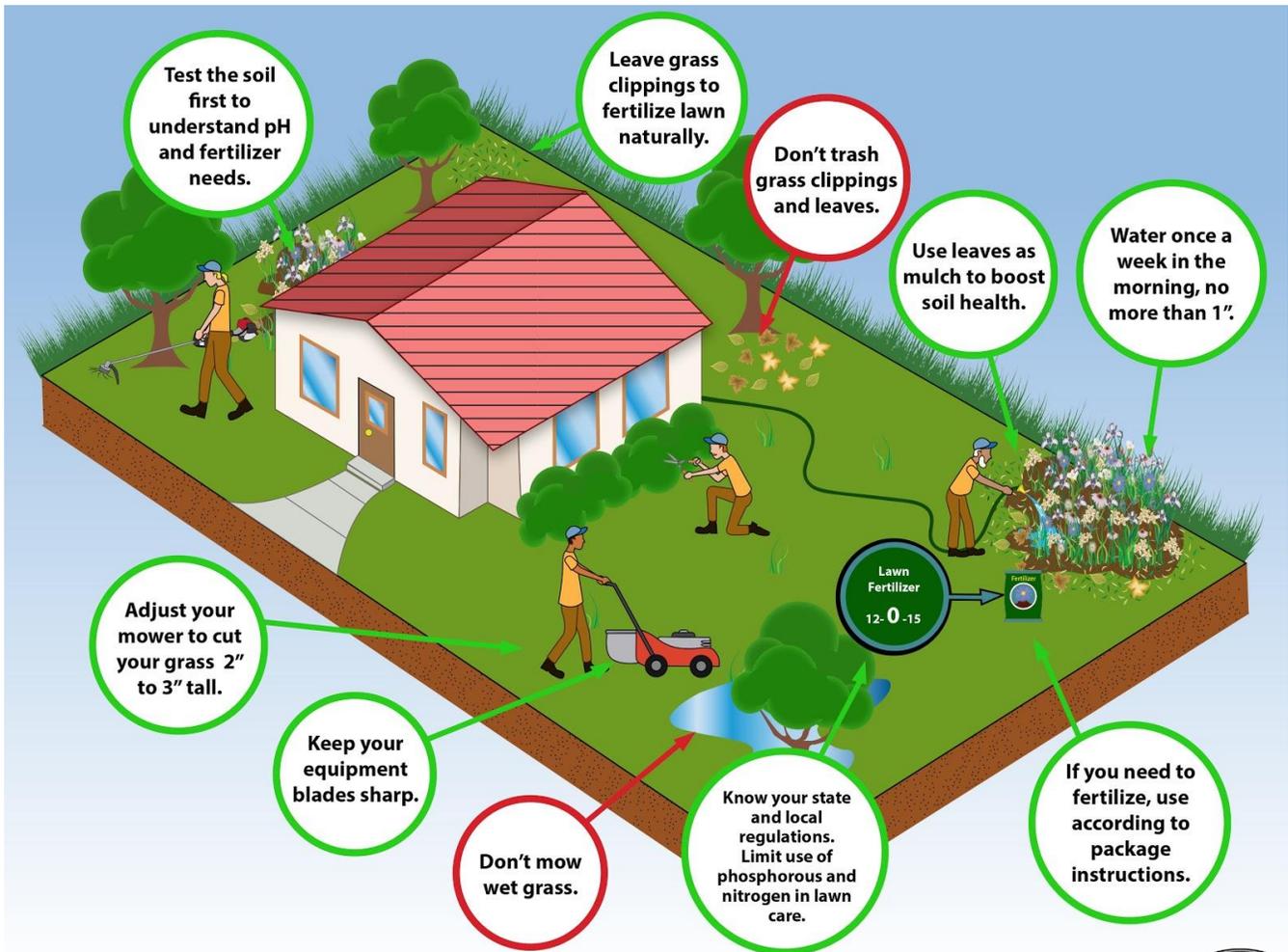
The Town of Chelmsford offers **TWO FREE** yard waste disposal events every year in May and November.

Open to Chelmsford residents only (bring I.D.)

It is **illegal** to dump or store yard waste within 100 feet of a pond, stream, or wetland in Chelmsford.

Yard waste is **NOT** allowed in trash-bins for curbside collection

- **FREE** drop-off for leaves and grass clippings in paper yard waste bag at the DPW: 9 Alpha Road
 - Next Event: **May 16, 2020**. 9 am - 1 pm
- **FREE** brush drop-off at Community Tree: 163 Billerica Road
 - **May 16, 2020**
 - No charge to residents on Town-sponsored brush drop-off days
 - Bring brush and branches up to 6 inches in diameter and 8 feet in length
 - No leaves – brush only
- Future event dates can be found in the Chelmsford Recycling and Trash Annual Guide



If you have questions or concerns, please email stormwater@townofchelmsford.us or call: 978-250-5228 ext 5235

More tips at <http://www.townofchelmsford.us/375/Stormwater>

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