

# For Cleaner Creeks, Save Fertilizer for the Fall.

*tips for stormwater management on your property*

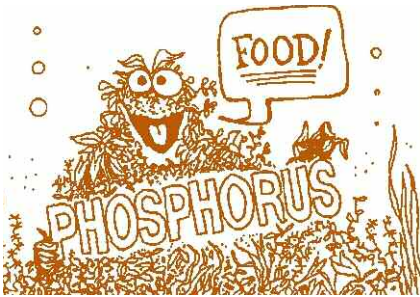
## DID YOU KNOW:

- Fertilizers contain nitrogen and phosphorus which wash or leach into our streams and ponds.
- Even small levels of these nutrients can overload ponds or streams, and result in undesirable weed and algae growth. Algae depletes oxygen, killing fish and limiting the diversity of what lives in our streams.

## To minimize the impact of lawn fertilization on our streams:

### 1 Fertilize in the fall.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection discourages spring application of fertilizer because it creates excessive top growth of grass. DEP recommends instead that homeowners **fertilize lawns around Labor Day** and use a second application in late October if needed. Fall fertilization promotes vigorous root growth and prevents fertilizer from leaching into streams and ponds in the spring.

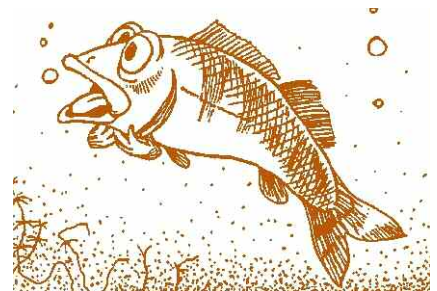


### 2 Do a soil test and consider phosphorus-free fertilizers.

Phosphorus is typically the limiting nutrient in algae growth. If your phosphorus levels are already adequate, select a phosphorus-free fertilizer. If your property drains to a stream, pond, or reservoir, do not use phosphate fertilizers. Mail-in soil test kits are available from your County Extension Service.

### 3 Use slow-release and organic alternatives.

Select fertilizers with "slow-release" forms of nitrogen which release more slowly into the soil and are less likely to leach. Choose organic rather than chemical-based fertilizers.



### 4 Limit application amounts to designated levels, and recycle grass clippings.

Lawns typically require 2.5 - 3 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year. Recycling grass clippings on your lawn can meet between 25% and 50% of nitrogen needs.



### 5 Avoid stream edges and stormwater conveyances.

Do not fertilize stormwater basins, or drainage swales leading to basins, or within 25 feet of stormwater basins or streams.

This message is brought to you by your municipality and Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association, [www.crcwatersheds.org](http://www.crcwatersheds.org).

Sources: PA Department of Environmental Protection "Grasscycling: It's OK, to Let it Lay."