When You're Fertilizing the Lawn, Remember... You're Not Just Fertilizing the Lawn.

You fertilize the lawn. Then it rains. The rain washes the fertilizer along the curb, into the storm drain, and directly into our waterways. The nutrients encourage algae to grow, using up oxygen that fish need to survive and thrive. So, if you fertilize, please follow directions, and use sparingly.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ADEM
Alabama Department of Environmental Management

CWP
Alabama
Clean Water Partnership

Thanks to the Washington Department of Ecology, King County, and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma.

Help Stop Pointless Pollution

Be a part of the cleanup of the waterways in our area.

Clean water is important to all of us.

In recent years, sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now, more than 60 percent of water pollution comes from sources like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from farms and gardens, and failing septic tanks. Each of us can do our part to help clean up our water.

Why do we need clean water?

Clean water is important to our health and economy. Clean water provides recreation, fish habitat, drinking water, and adds beauty to our landscape. Everyone benefits from clean water.

What's the problem with fertilizer?

Fertilizer is not a problem when it is used correctly. In waterways, as in your yard, too much fertilizer can promote excessive algae and aquatic plants. This can harm water quality and make boating, fishing and swimming unpleasant.

For more information on soil testing, fertilizing alternatives and composting, call your County Cooperative Extension Agent or go to http://www.aces.edu/directory/.

How can you apply fertilizers and help keep our waters clean?

- Use fertilizers sparingly. Follow the manufacturers instructions.
- Have your soil tested for fertilizer needs.
- Don't apply fertilizers before a rainstorm.
- Consider using organic fertilizers, since they release nutrients slowly.
- Use commercially available compost or make your own using a garden composter. Mixing compost with your soil means your plants will need less chemical fertilizer. Commercial compost and soil amendments may be available from your solid waste or wastewater utility as well as your local lawn and garden store.

For more information contact:

Alabama Department of Environmental Management
Office of Education and Outreach
(334) 260-4501

Municipal Storm Water Program
(334) 271-7823