

Sources of Phosphorus in an Urban Landscape

Pervious

- Lawns
- Gardens
- Flower bed
- Fire pits

Impervious

- Sidewalks
- Roofs
- Driveways
- Streets

Picture credits:

University of Wisconsin Extension

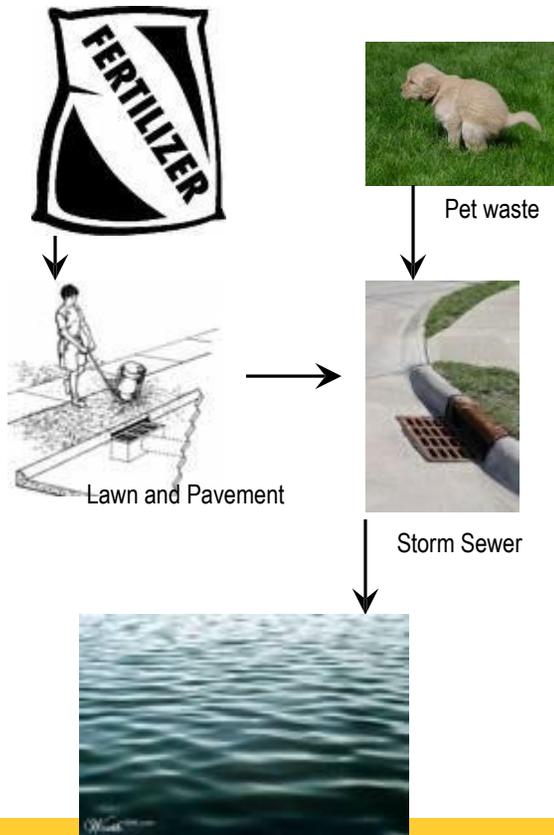
Dakota County, MN

www.worth1000.com

www.lowes.com

Ladpw.org/epd/hhw/resources/illustration.cfm

PHOSPHORUS IN LAKE COUNTY, IL



For more information contact:

The Lakes Management Unit
 500 W. Winchester Rd, Suite 102
 Libertyville, IL 60048
 847-377-8030
www.lakecountyil.gov/2381/Lakes-Management-Unit



Excessive phosphorus can lead to algal blooms in lakes.



Grass clippings add phosphorus to lakes.

Streams and Lakes

Are you fertilizing more than your grass?

- **Phosphorus turns lakes and rivers green by stimulating algal growth.** This interferes with plant growth and reduces oxygen available to fish.
- **A common cause of excess phosphorus is runoff.** Most soils in the county have adequate phosphorus. A simple soil test will confirm if you need to add phosphorus.
- **Nitrogen, not phosphorus, makes grass greener.** Phosphorus-free fertilizer still contains nitrogen.
- **The storm drain on your street is a link to the rivers and lakes in the county.**



Get Involved

- Become involved in the watershed planning process.
- Encourage/support efforts to reduce or eliminate fertilizers containing phosphorus.
- Encourage local businesses to carry phosphorus-free fertilizers.

What you can do in your own back yard:

- Keep leaves, seeds, and lawn clippings out of gutters, streets, and ditches.
- Pick up pet waste promptly.
- Control soil erosion around homes.
- Leave a buffer of native plants between lake and home to reduce runoff and phosphorus.
- Use phosphorus-free fertilizer (middle number should equal 0).



Find out what your soil needs:

Test it

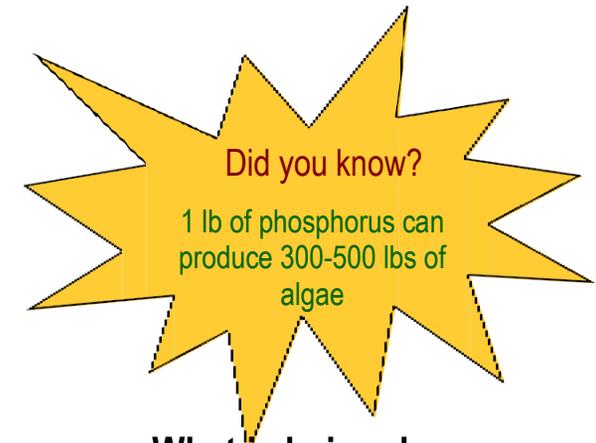
You should test your soil before applying fertilizers. Testing your soil will save you money and prevent excess phosphorus from being applied. Soils in most of Lake County have an adequate amount of phosphorus to grow a healthy lawn. Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District (www.lakeswcd.org/Soil%20Testing.htm).



Time the application when the forecast is rain-free. Sweep up any spillage immediately and avoid fertilizing near storm drains or waterways.

Watersheds and Urban Runoff

A watershed is the area of land that drains into a lake or stream. A body of water is affected by practices within the entire watershed. Although phosphorus is applied to lawns that are not on a lake or stream, the phosphorus is carried into the waterbody via runoff throughout the watershed.



What is being done

- In 2005, Minnesota banned fertilizer containing phosphorus for the whole state except for soils in which tests required phosphorus.
- In 2010, the state of Illinois passed a law to reduce the amount of phosphorus content in dishwashing and laundry detergent. Also in 2010, Illinois passed a law restricting the use of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus by commercial applicators.
- In Lake County, IL, many municipalities and townships have created phosphorus bans and ordinances to restrict phosphorus use in fertilizer.