



Loudoun County lies within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Land use, agricultural activities, and stormwater pollution in Loudoun County affect the health of the Bay.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Department of General Services
Steve Plante, Chief
Stormwater Management
801 Sycolin Road, Suite 300
Leesburg, VA 20175
(571) 258-3227
www.loudoun.gov/stormwater

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, VISIT:

Virginia Co-Operative Extension
Loudoun County Master Gardeners
www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org

Chesapeake Bay Foundation
www.cbf.org/landscaping



Loudoun County appreciates your help in protecting our valuable water resources.

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Department of General Services
801 Sycolin Road, Suite 300
Leesburg, VA 20175



Help Protect Loudoun County's
Streams and Lakes

Commercial Lawn Care A Guide for Preventing Stormwater Pollution



Be the Solution to Stormwater Pollution



the problem

Lawn care companies provide nutrient management services for many residents, homeowner associations, and commercial properties throughout Loudoun County and have an important role to play in helping to protect the environment by ensuring proper application of fertilizers.

Overuse and improper application of lawn chemicals increases the opportunity for them to enter the stormwater system. Rainwater washes fertilizers and residues from lawns, driveways, sidewalks and streets into curb gutters and down storm drains which lead directly to local streams, the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

Nutrients from fertilizers impact our streams, but cause even greater damage as they accumulate in the Bay. Excessive growth of algae, fueled by the nitrogen from fertilizers, reduces dissolved oxygen in the water and creates devastating conditions for fish, shellfish and other aquatic life. In fact, according to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, excess nutrients are the main cause of the Bay's poor health, including expansive "dead zones" where little to no oxygen is available, causing fish, crabs, oysters, and other aquatic animals to literally suffocate. (www.cbf.org/about-the-bay/issues/dead-zones)



Photo by Steve Droter, Chesapeake Bay Program

the facts

The Chesapeake Bay watershed contains 3 million acres of turf. Half of those lawns are fertilized, mostly with synthetic chemical fertilizers, and half of those fertilized lawns are over-fertilized. (*Center for Watershed Protection Survey*)



Photo by Michael Weaver, Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs

Typical lawn turf only requires fertilizers to be applied in the late summer through fall of each year, yet fertilizers are applied in many cases when they are not needed, such as in the spring.

Lawn care costs may be reduced by ensuring proper application times and rates for fertilizer are followed.

Leaving grass clippings on your lawn can generate up to 25%-50% of the lawn's yearly fertilizer needs.

Commercial lawn care service providers who apply fertilizers must be certified and permitted by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Contact the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for more information at 804-786-1343.

the solution

Best Management Practices:

- Create a nutrient management plan that ensures pollution prevention.
- Support or require employee certification for proper application of fertilizers.
- Perform a soil test to determine if a lawn needs fertilizer, what is needed and in what quantity.
- Homeowner Associations and residents may contact the Loudoun County Cooperative Extension Service to request a soil test. Call 703-777-0373.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to reduce the amount of chemical fertilizers needed.
- Be careful not to allow liquid fertilizer to be sprayed onto impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways, and streets.
- Remove granular fertilizers from driveways, sidewalks, and streets.
- Do not leave grass clippings or yard waste in the street. Nutrient residues from grass clippings will wash into storm drains.
- Avoid fertilizer applications on windy days or before heavy rain.
- Lightly water the lawn immediately following fertilizer application.
- Rinse equipment in the yard, and never into a street gutter or storm drain.