

For questions and comments
regarding this new legislation
please visit our website at
www.gwlc.org

Or write or call

The Greenwood Lake
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Protect Your Lake

Use Fertilizer to Feed Your Lawn



Without Feeding Your Lake

It's The Law

The NJ Fertilizer Law, A2290, was conceived to protect all New Jersey surface and ground waters from impairment by minimizing the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus entering waterways which may be derived from lawn fertilizer. While excess nitrogen is a threat to coastal water quality, and excess phosphorus is a threat to fresh water quality, both nutrients are also important for plant growth and health.

Quick Facts About NJ Fertilizer Law

- Establishes statewide fertilizer standards
- Prohibits the time that fertilizer can be used (Provides “Blackout Dates”)
 - Consumers: (Nov. 15th– Mar. 1st)
 - Professionals: (Dec. 1st–Mar. 1st)
- Restricts amount of **water-soluble** nitrogen used per application
 - Consumers/ Professionals: (*0.7lb per 1000ft*)
- Restricts amount of **total** nitrogen used per application/year
 - Consumers: (*0.9 per 1000ft/ 3.2lb per 1000ft*)
 - Professionals: (*1lb per 1000ft/ 4.25 lb per 1000ft*)
- Prohibits fertilizer application during or just before heavy rainfall, onto an impervious surface, or onto frozen ground
- Restricts fertilizer content
 - At least 20% of nitrogen content must be in slow-release form
- Establishes buffers
 - Fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus can not be applied to turf within 25ft of any waterbody except where a drop spreader, rotary spreader with a deflector, or targeted spray liquid is used, then the buffer may be reduced to 10 feet

For Full NJ Fertilizer Law—Please visit
www.greenwoodlakecommission.org/publications

What's The Big Deal?

According to Department of Environmental Protection's Commissioner Bob Martin "No doubt a green and healthy lawn gives many of us a great sense of pride and accomplishment, but many people tend to overuse fertilizers or apply them sloppily, leading to degraded water quality from too many nutrients being carried with stormwater runoff into our streams, lakes, rivers and bays."

The Main Ingredients



Nitrogen (N)— Used by terrestrial plants to promote leaf growth and produce greener lusher leaves (Left Number)

Phosphorus (P)— Used by terrestrial plants to produce fruit and promote a stronger root system (Middle Number)

Potassium (K)— Used by terrestrial plants for flower color and size while also being important for the strength of the plant (Right Number)

In a terrestrial environment (your lawn), very little phosphorus is required and it relies mostly on nitrogen while in an aquatic environment (your lake), lake weeds and algae rely on mostly phosphorus and require very little nitrogen.

What Can I Do?

Use Lake-Friendly Fertilizer

- Fertilizer with little to no phosphorus
- Look for bags with “**zero**” as middle number
- Since most phosphorus will remain unused, it can wash directly into your lake!

Application

- Apply fertilizer at the spreader setting shown on the bag, to avoid overuse or underuse of product
- Do not apply fertilizer products if a heavy rain is predicted, after one has occurred or ground is already saturated
- Use a drop spreader or a rotary spreader with a side guard to keep fertilizer on the lawn and off driveways, roadways and walkways. Sweep up excess fertilizer from paved surfaces

Soil Testing

- Soil testing can help identify what nutrients your lawn really needs
- Soil PH testing kits can be found at most local hardware/gardening stores
- Optimal soil PH is between 6-7 which increases the uptake of nutrients while reducing the need for fertilizers

Alternative Practices

- Keep lawns to a minimum
- Cut grass longer for more absorption
- Plant a 25' buffer of native plants and shrubs at lakes' edge which will slow down and absorb water runoff preventing pollutants from entering our lake
- Spring and Fall are best times for fertilizer application, as weather conditions promote nutrient absorption

What's Next?

Stage 2: January 5, 2012

- All professionals will be required to be certified. The nitrogen content of fertilizers will be set for products used by consumers and professionals. The use of phosphorus will be banned without a soil test

Stage 3: January 5, 2013

- Outlaws fertilizer products that do not meet the new content standards set by the law