

Pesticide & Fertilizer Pollution

Information Sheet

Preventing Stormwater Pollution

When rainwater travels over our yards, driveways, roads and parking lots, the water picks up chemicals, metals, sediment and oils and conveys them to our creeks, rivers, wetlands and the ocean. This pollution harms fish and many other species.

Pesticides and fertilizers are one source of this pollution. They can pollute both soil and groundwater, and can remain in the environment for long periods of time after application. If these chemicals are flushed into the stormwater system when the fall rains come, they head straight to our creeks and waterways.



Avoid Pesticide Use

“Pesticide” is the general term for any substance designed to eliminate undesired insects, weeds, rodents, fungi, bacteria and other organisms. Pesticides come in many forms and can be categorized as insecticides (for insects), herbicides (for weeds), and fungicides (for fungal diseases).

They often harm non-target plants, pets, beneficial insects and wildlife and runoff into local waterways, streams and the ocean. They can also have severe impacts on humans, especially children.

Manage Pests without Pesticides

- Use pure castile soap to wash leaves and eliminate pests or try a blast of water from the hose.
- Baking soda and vegetable-based oil can be used to eliminate fungal diseases.
- Use traps for slugs and crushed eggshells to deter crawling pests.
- Use companion planting techniques and “plant traps” such as nasturtiums to trap aphids.
- Attract beneficial insects and wildlife such as ladybugs, frogs, birds and bats - they will eat the pests.

DIY Garden Spray to Deter Insects

Mix and spray generously on affected plant daily



Make in jar:

1 cup vegetable oil
1 tbsp pure castile soap*



Make in spray bottle:

1 tbsp of jar mixture
1 cup of warm water



Avoid Fertilizer Use

Fertilizers are often over-used to maintain grass lawns and boulevards. When the excess nutrients can't all be used by the plants, they run-off soils and into the natural environment "fertilizing" our lakes and rivers. This impacts ecosystems and upsets the healthy balance causing a negative impact to aquatic habitats.

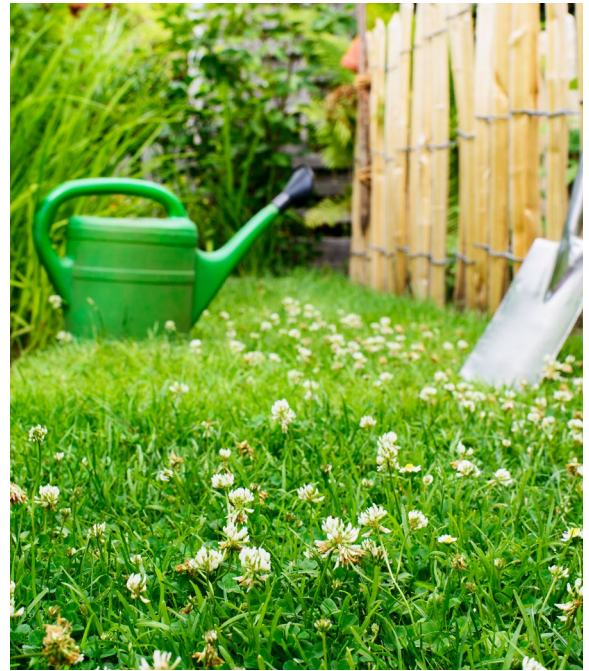
Fertilizer is not needed for most lawns and gardens if healthy soil is created and maintained. Good soil structure is created by billions of soil organisms to allow air, water and plant roots in the soil. Soil organisms feed on organic matter such as mulch and compost and recycle nutrients back into the soil. By starting with healthy soil, you will save time, frustration, money and water in the long run. A healthy soil will hold more nutrients and water resulting in healthier plants.

Create Healthy Soil without Fertilizer

- Add organic compost annually to existing beds and lawns
- Add clover to your lawn to fix nitrogen, naturally.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to cycle back into the soil, adding nutrients.
- Follow other lawn care best practices such as aeration and adding lime if needed.
- If using fertilizers, use organic only, and use sparingly to prevent runoff.
- Add raked leaves to beds to suppress weeds and add nutrients.

Pesticide & Fertilizer Disposal

Pesticides are household hazardous waste and must be properly disposed of. If added to the garbage or flushed, these chemicals can harm septic systems, impact sewer infrastructure and damage the environment. Drop off leftover pesticides and fertilizers at the Hartland Depot free of charge, or check depots around the region: www.crd.bc.ca/hhw.



Tip: Add clover to your lawn



Tip: Spread compost on your lawn

To learn more about living green and protecting the environment at home, visit www.crd.bc.ca/cleanwater

July 2022

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