

## HOW WOOD-LAND-LAKES CAN HELP

- \* Serve as a clearing house for information
- \* Assist with locating soil testing equipment, fertilizer and funding sources
- \* Increase public awareness of lakes and lawns



### Wood-Land-Lakes:

- \* Combination of volunteers solving natural resource problems through local involvement
- \* Serves DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties
- \* Tax exempt organization



### Mission

**VOLUNTEERS WORKING TOGETHER FOR  
RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

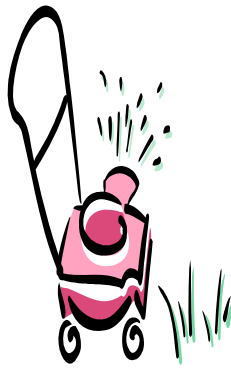
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## FEED YOUR LAWN, NOT YOUR LAKE

### Ways to Help Your Lawns Without Harming Your Lakes



**LUSH LAWNS  
AND  
SPARKLING LAKES  
CAN BE  
COMPATIBLE**



## FERTILIZING YOUR LAKE LAWN

During the past several years we've all heard, "Don't fertilize so much." Here are some

basic fertilizing tips.

Don't misunderstand. Healthy lawns reduce runoff and erosion, produce oxygen, absorb noise, provide cooling, absorb pollutants such as carbon dioxide, resist insect infestation, and they look terrific! We also support responsible care of our most valuable resource, our lakes.



## WHAT IS FERTILIZER?

- \* Materials that provide nutrients for increased plant growth
- \* Usually supply nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (N-P-K)
- \* N-P-K is expressed as a ratio on the package label. A 4:3:2 fertilizer contains 4% nitrogen, 3% phosphorus and 2% potassium

## ORGANIC VS INORGANIC

Organic Fertilizer:

- \* slow-release of nutrients
- \* long term food source
- \* can create your own (compost)
- \* feeds the soil to feed the grass

Inorganic Fertilizer:

- \* usually more concentrated
- \* more soluble; short term food source
- \* if not applied properly, can leach through the soil quickly
- \* feeds the grass directly

## HOW FERTILIZERS HURT LAKES

- \* excess fertilizer (N & P) promotes algae and weeds
- \* as plants decay, oxygen levels decrease
- \* reduced oxygen levels may cause fish kills
- \* lakes grow old and fill up with decayed plant and fish material

## DON'T

- \* apply fertilizer more than 3 times a year
- \* apply more than 1 lb/1000 sq ft of fertilizer at one time
- \* apply fertilizer (or other products) within 20' of the lake
- \* put leaves, grass clippings or limbs in the lake; add nutrients directly to the water

## WHAT CAN I DO ?

- \* be the one person to make a difference
- \* have a soil test
- \* use fertilizer sparingly and as needed
- \* apply fertilizer with low amounts or no phosphorus (P)
- \* only fertilize in the fall for cool season grasses such as KY bluegrass or fescue



- \* leave at least 25' of naturally vegetated areas along lake shores to intercept fertilizer before reaching the lake
- \* leave grass clippings on the lawn to provide nutrients back to the soil
- \* plant deep-rooted vegetation along shore to take up nutrients before reaching the lake
- \* talk with your neighbors about their fertilizing habits
- \* rethink need for high maintenance lawns; consider planting ground cover or shrubs
- \* never apply fertilizer to areas that drain into lake or inlets to the lake
- \* never apply fertilizer to dormant lawns or frozen ground