



Rethinking lawn care can save not only time and money, it can also help improve water quality. Improperly applied fertilizers and pesticides can wash into storm drains and ditches where they eventually travel to lakes and streams. It is time to think about how we can protect and improve our water quality. The tips in this brochure will provide the residents of the Silver Creek Watershed with some water quality items to consider when applying fertilizers and pesticides.

# The Link Between Lawn Care & Water Quality



Good Water Quality in the Lakes & Streams of the Silver Creek Watershed, Starts With You!

*The Mission of the Silver Creek Watershed Improvement Project is to Protect and Conserve the Natural Resources of Silver Creek Watershed through Education, Monitoring, and Planning, Thereby Creating a Healthy Watershed. If you are interested in learning more contact:*



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Clark County  
 SWCD



Proper Selection and Application of Fertilizers & Pesticides is a STEP in the right direction!



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## Fertilizers: What Can I Do?



- ALWAYS FOLLOW LABELS and apply in proper amounts.
- Test soil for nutrients and use the tests to choose a fertilizer that only adds the needed nutrients.
- Apply fertilizer only when it is needed, during the right season and in proper amounts.
- Don't use fertilizers near wells or surface water.
- Use a spreader to ensure proper application rates and calibrate your spreader often.
- Store leftovers properly for later use.
- Be prudent in your use of phosphorus fertilizer. A soil test will help determine if phosphorus is needed.
- Avoid getting fertilizer on driveways and sidewalks and if you do, sweep it up (don't use a hose).
- Do not apply fertilizer before heavy rain is forecasted.

**THE LABEL** CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT PROPER APPLICATION. IF YOU OVER APPLY PESTICIDES/FERTILIZERS THE EXTRA CONCENTRATION CAN LEAK INTO THE WATER SUPPLY & COULD EVEN DAMAGE YOUR PLANTS.



## What's the Big Deal?

Improperly Applied Fertilizers & Pesticides can:

- Contaminate ground and surface water.
- Stimulate algae growth in rivers and streams. Excessive algae growth can lower oxygen levels in lakes and ponds, thus killing fish and other aquatic life.
- Lead to increased drinking water treatment costs.
- Be toxic to plants and animals.
- Hurt your budget! Improper fertilization can end up costing you more money.

## Not All Insects Are Bad!

Most are actually beneficial. They provide us with many services including; decomposing, recycling, pollination, food sources for wildlife and some even keep true pests under control. Before you begin using insecticides, ensure you are not targeting beneficial insects. Some of which include:



### The Lady Bug:

A predator who helps control the population of crop and garden pests like aphids.

### The Honeybee:

A pollinator of crops, flowers, and other plants. They also provide us with beeswax and honey.



### The Tiger Beetle:

A predator who helps control the population of other insects.

### The Antlion:

A predator that feeds on ants & spiders (common nuisances to humans).



## Pesticides: What Can I Do?



- ALWAYS FOLLOW LABELS and apply in proper amounts.
- Match the Pesticide to the Pest. Ensure that the product being used will be effective for the problem.
- Dispose of, or store leftovers appropriately, in accordance with the label.
- Utilize Integrated Pest Management (visit Purdue Extension, [www.extension.entm.purdue.edu/radicalbugs/](http://www.extension.entm.purdue.edu/radicalbugs/) for more information).
- Clean up any spilled chemicals. Chemicals spilled on pavement during chemical mixing and loading can quickly be washed away with the next rain to pollute lakes and streams.

