What is the issue with Fertilizer?

Nutrient Pollution is present in many Rockland County waterbodies due to **excess Nitrogen and Phosphorus nutrients.** Fertilizers contain Nitrogen and Phosphorus to promote lawn growth, and when applied to lawns that are **too thin** or **prior to periods of rain**, the lawn cannot absorb all the Nutrients.

During the next rain storm the **excess** Nutrients wash off the lawn to storm drains then local waterbodies, starting the process of **Nutrient Eutrophication ("richness")**, a top Water Quality Issue in NYS, that impairs our waters.

Aren't Nutrients Good for Waterbodies?
YES!
How Do They Cause Harm?

Rockland County's Fertilizer Law:

Over-fertilized/overwatered lawns is a significant source of excess nutrients in waterbodies. If applying lawn fertilizer in Rockland County you must obey the **Lawn Fertilizer Regulation Act of 2009.**

Under the Act, no person shall apply any **lawn** fertilizer:

- Between December 1st and April 1st.
- To any Impervious surface (parking lots, roadways, sidewalks).
- To any lawn or turf within 50 feet of any surface water. This does not apply where a continuous, 10 foot minimum natural vegetative buffer separates the lawn or turf area and the surface water.
- Containing Phosphorus or such compounds (phosphate), except as provided in the Exemptions (below).

Exemptions:

- Turf or Lawn areas soil tested that confirm the need for additional phosphorus. The amount applied shall not exceed the amount and rate recommended from the soil test. See back on **where to get a soil test**.
- Agricultural uses, applications to trees, shrubs, vegetable and flower gardens.

Buying/Selling Fertilizer:

- No one shall display for sale lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus.
- Signs must be posted advising customers that phosphorus fertilizers are available upon request.
- Sellers are required to post a sign regarding the Act and the effect of Nitrogen and Phosphorus on Water Quality in Rockland County.

Educational Requirements:

- Every person who offers or provides **lawn or turf services, in operation of a home improvement business**, shall complete a turf management course every two years. See our **Fertilizer Law Course**, held monthly.
  https://rocklandcce.org/events/2023/03/01/fertilizer-law-certificate-program-2023-now-online

Where to get a Soil Test
(see Exemptions, previous side):

What you can have tested:

- **pH Test**
- **Nutrients & pH:** Pick up a free test box to mail out.

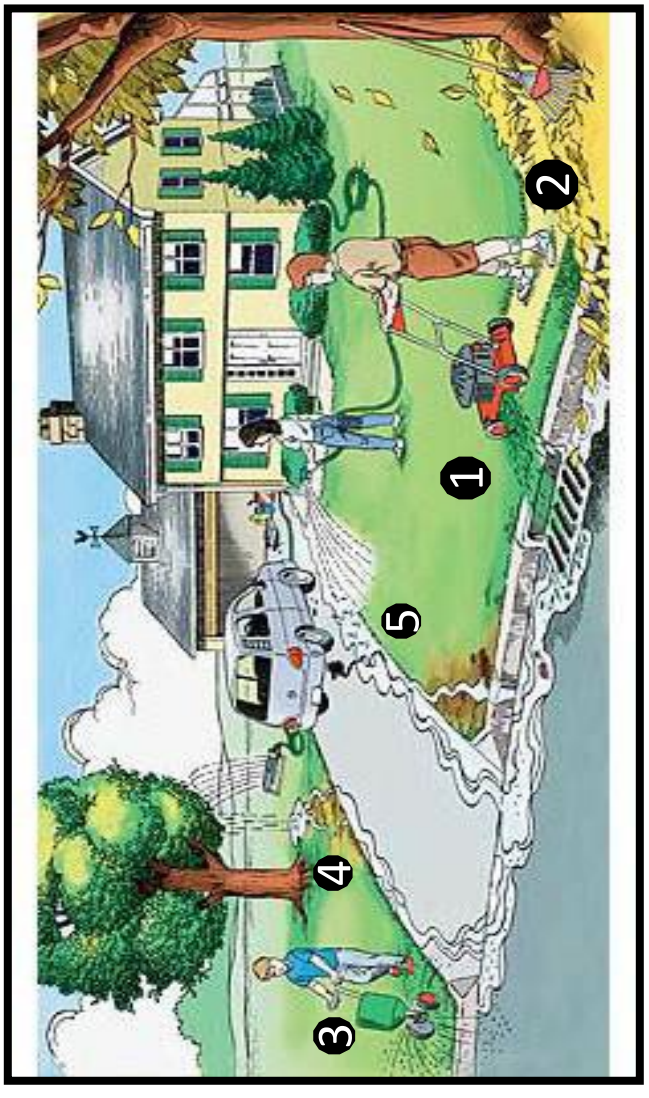
Cornell University
Cooperative Extension, Rockland County
10 Patriot Hills Drive
Stony Point, NY 10980
Phone: (845) 429-7085
Website: www.rocklandcce.org

Most soils in Rockland County have **adequate Phosphorus**.
You may only apply Phosphorus **under the Law's Exceptions.**

LOOK FOR THE ZERO
Protect Your Waters

Photo & Images courtesy of:
USEPA; NYSDEC; Department of Horticulture, Cornell University, hort.cals.cornell.edu

Where does Nutrient Pollution come from?



1&2: Leaves & Grass Clippings to Catch Basin
3: Applying Fertilizer on Impervious Surface (washing to Catch Basin)
4&5: Overwatering fertilized lawn, draining to Catch Basin

These practices cause **Nutrient Pollution** and contribute to **Algae Blooms**

Rockland County Fertilizer Law:
http://ecode360.com/14213147

CCE Sustainable Landscapes: Lawn/Turf management, IPM, etc.
http://rocklandcce.org/environment/sustainable-rockland

Get Involved with Water Quality!

Get YOUTH, COLLEGE STUDENTS or the WHOLE FAMILY involved with **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP in Rockland County!**
http://rocklandcce.org/stormwater-consortium-water-quality-education/volunteer-opportunities

Are you **LEGALLY** Applying Fertilizer in Rockland County?

Image: NYS DEC

Protecting Our Water Resources
Stormwater Consortium of ROCKLAND COUNTY

Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Rockland County
10 Patriot Hills Drive
Stony Point, NY 10980
Phone: (845) 429-7085
Website: www.rocklandcce.org