

**WHEN YOU'RE FERTILIZING THE LAWN,**

**REMEMBER YOU'RE NOT JUST  
FERTILIZING THE LAWN.**

*www.DelawareEstuary.org*



You fertilize the lawn. Then it rains. The rain washes the fertilizer along the curb, into the storm drain, and into the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. This causes algae to grow, which uses up oxygen that fish need to survive. So if you fertilize, please follow directions and use sparingly.

Thanks to the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County, and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Use fertilizers sparingly. Lawns and many plants do not need as much fertilizer or need it as often as you might think. Test your soil to be sure. Consider using organic fertilizers because they release nutrients more slowly.
- Don't fertilize before a rain storm, and don't fertilize your sidewalks and driveways.
- Use commercially available compost, or make your own using your garden/yard waste. Mixing compost with your soil means your plants will need less chemical fertilizer and puts your waste to good use. Commercial compost and soil amendments may be available from your solid waste or wastewater utility, as well as your local garden store.
- Let your grass clippings lay! Don't bag the grass. Use a mulching lawn mower to cut one-third of the blade length each week and naturally fertilize your lawn in the process.
- Wash your spreader equipment on a pervious or penetrable vegetated area, like the lawn, to allow for the natural absorption of excess fertilizer.
- Maintain a buffer strip of unmowed natural vegetation bordering waterways and ponds to trap excess fertilizers and sediment from lawns/gardens.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT THESE WEB SITES:**

[www.delcocd.org](http://www.delcocd.org)

[www.chesco.org](http://www.chesco.org)

[www.pa.dep.us](http://www.pa.dep.us)

*Reprinted with permission from:*

