

Fox Cities Viewpoint- Lawn Fertilizers

As you watch your kids climb onto the school bus, you realize summer is over. Even though winter is not far behind, now is the time to plan for next spring's lawn.

If you need to use lawn fertilizers, keep these points in mind:

- Do a soil test and learn what your lawn really needs;
- Start fertilizing in early October when the average daily temperature drops to 50 degrees;
- Try using no- or low-phosphorus fertilizers;
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn and reduce the need for nitrogen by 30-40 percent;
- Sweep excess fertilizer back onto the lawn; never pour anything down the storm drain.

A healthy lawn reduces the need for fertilizing, leaving you with more time for the kids when they get home from school.

The Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium is a partnership of area communities working together to educate you on how we can make great strides in protecting and enjoying our environment.

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Fox Cities Viewpoint- Raking Leaves

A shout of "Geronimo!" and the sound of running feet cause you to turn just in time to see your hard-earned leaf pile scatter. You remember doing the same thing years ago and a smile comes to your face, even if it means more raking.

However, leaves, like grass clippings, contain phosphorus, the nutrient that turns lakes green with algae. Simple ways you can help to keep our lakes and rivers clean:

- Consider mulching them in place by making several passes with a power mower. The shredded leaves will provide nutrients back to your lawn;
- Compost your leaves into mulch to place around your vegetables and flowers;
- Spread leaves in garden beds or under shrubs;
- Follow your community leaf collection policies and schedule;
- Learn about your community yard waste disposal practices;
- Put a tarp over leaf piles between pick-up times to prevent them from blowing away;
- Clean leaves and debris from the gutters and storm sewer outlets

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The above public service announcements were created by the Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium.