

We all live downstream!

All of us live downstream of other communities and we don't want them sending their pollutants to us. We also live upstream of someone else's community and we have a responsibility not to send our waste to our downstream neighbors too.

Products like pesticides and fertilizers are one of the biggest sources of pollution in our waterways. When these products are applied on lawns, they get washed away with stormwater which isn't treated before it reaches local waterways like Monument or Fountain Creek.

There are easy steps you can take in lawn care to help reduce the amount of pollutants reaching our waterways. Thank you for taking the time to read the information and suggestions in this brochure.



For further information, contact:

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| City of Colorado Springs Stormwater
www.SpringsGov.com/stormwater (stormwater quality) | 385-5980 |
| Colorado Springs Utilities Xeriscape Office
www.csu.org (pesticide/plant alternatives) | 448-4800 |
| Colorado Springs Utilities Industrial Pretreatment Section
www.csu.org (industrial discharges to the treatment plant) | 668-4497 |
| El Paso County, Solid Waste Management
www.elpasoco.com | 520-7878 |
| Colorado State Univ. Cooperative Extension
(pesticide alternatives) | 636-8921 |



CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS STORMWATER

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This brochure and more information is available electronically at
www.SpringsGov.com/stormwater.

This brochure is also available in Spanish.

Printed on recycled paper.

CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS STORMWATER

What are YOU putting in the water? Water Quality Guide for Lawn Care



Phone: 719.385.5980

www.SpringsGov.com/stormwater

Easy steps you can take to reduce pollutants in our waterways while keeping your lawn looking great!



When it rains, the runoff picks up all kinds of things from the ground, including fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides you put on your lawn. This water goes **untreated** into our local waterways and this type of runoff is a significant source of pollution in our creeks and streams. The good news is that there are easy steps you can take in caring for your lawn that will reduce the amount of pollutants and improve the water quality in our community.

If you are a commercial landscaper, you are **legally responsible** for ensuring stormwater pollutants are properly managed and these tips will help you meet that obligation.

Caring for your lawn properly can both enhance its appearance and provide environmental benefits. Healthy grass is a feeding ground for birds, while also preventing soil erosion, filtering contaminants from rainwater, and absorbing many types of airborne pollutants. These tips will help you achieve a healthy lawn while minimizing negative impacts caused by improper lawn care.

Lawn care tips

- Use organic mulch and environmentally-friendly pest control when possible.
- When necessary, use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers sparingly and follow manufacturer's directions. Excess is washed into streams where it pollutes the water.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Grass clippings naturally fertilize your lawn and do not cause thatch in Colorado.
- Don't leave or sweep clippings or other yard waste in the street, on sidewalks, driveways or parking lots, especially around storm drains. Clogged drains cause maintenance and flooding issues.
- Don't over water. See www.csu.org for tips on reducing water use.



Leave grass clippings on the lawn to fertilize your yard naturally.

To reduce fertilizer use

- Choose plants that resist drought and enhance the growth of other plants.
- Use a mulching mower and cut 1/3 of the height of the grass. Clipped grass adds nutrients back into the soil.
- Cut grass more often and only when dry.
- Use sharp blades.
- Compost yard waste and use it in flower beds and gardens.

To reduce pesticide use

- Landscape for low maintenance and use native plants to aid pest control.
- Attract birds or bats to your yard. They eat many types of insects including flies and mosquitoes.
- Use integrated pest management strategies (IPM) to control pests. IPM integrates biological principles, cultural practices and limited chemicals in pest control strategies.

Other things to know

- Recycle or properly dispose of products that contain chemicals, such as pesticides and fertilizers. Don't pour them on the ground or into storm drains. You can dispose of them properly through El Paso County. Ph: 520-7878
- Report any chemical spill to the local hazardous waste cleanup team at 520-7878. In an emergency, call 911.
- **Call 444-7000 to report illegal dumping.**