



Borough of West Grove
117 Rosehill Avenue, P O Box 61
West Grove, PA 19390-0061

Phone: (610) 869-2792

Fax: (610) 869-4138

www.westgroveborough.org

E-mail: administrator@westgroveborough.org

Rain Check **Reducing Stormwater Runoff**

When the amount of rain falling exceeds the land's ability to absorb it, the result is stormwater runoff.

Stormwater-Friendly Lawns and Gardens

Without treatment, stormwater that runs from the land into our waterways can be unhealthy for people and bad for the environment. Runoff can carry chemicals, metals, bacteria, viruses, organic compounds, and other pollutants directly into creeks, lakes, rivers, and streams. Runoff can also cause severe erosion and flooding — even during a typical Pennsylvania storm.

What can we do? Homeowners can take steps to help with the effort by making sure their gardens and lawns are "stormwater-friendly."

Gardens can contribute considerable nutrients and other pollutants to waterways if not cared for responsibly. Instead of using chemical fertilizers, give organic alternatives, such as compost and manure a try.

Insects are harmless to people and play an important role in

maintaining a healthy lawn or garden ecosystem. If one is posing a problem, identify the exact pest and research the non-chemical alternative. Pesticides should be a last resort.

Lawn-care steps not only help to protect local streams and rivers but also result in cost savings for homeowners. Setting your mower

height to 3 inches or higher slows runoff and produces a deeper and denser root system, which absorbs more water and prevents erosion. Keep the grass clippings and chopped leaves. They decompose quickly providing

important nutrients for your lawn.

Do you really need to fertilize your lawn? If your lawn is thin or has bare spots, you may not have a choice since a dense, vegetated cover is the most stormwater-friendly lawn. There are no one-size-fits-all guidelines when it comes to fertilizer because of soil texture and pH and nutrient levels. Identifying your lawn's needs first

will reduce unnecessary applications, create a healthier lawn faster, and reduce your long-term costs. If fertilizer is needed, maximize the benefits of slow-release nitrogen, typically called "water insoluble nitrogen" or WIN, and minimize the number of chemical applications. Another tip: Homeowners should wait until the grass begins growing in March to fertilize and then stop fertilizing after October.

Do not fertilize or use pesticides within 15 to 20 feet of a stream. If you live near a stream, consider establishing a natural riparian buffer there instead. When you're done applying fertilizer, immediately sweep any granulated chemicals off hard surfaces.

To learn more about a natural riparian buffers, visit www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org and click on "Structural BMPs."

Note: Information courtesy of StormwaterPA and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.