

Get wise about your lawn. Consider your options.

When it rains, fertilizers washing off lawns flow into our streets, down storm drains, and into nearby lakes, streams, or rivers.

Good practices around your home and garden that eliminate contaminated storm flows will help reduce costs associated with water pollution and get us to fishable and swimmable lakes and rivers in the Pioneer Valley region.

Please do your part and join your friends and neighbors for clean water. The three practices listed here give you a great starting place!



- 1. Test your soil.** A soil test lets you know what your lawn and garden need for nutrients so that you don't waste money. UMass Extension provides soil testing services. See: <https://ag.umass.edu/services/soil-plant-nutrient-testing-laboratory>
- 2. Leave grass clippings where they fall.** Grass clippings left on the lawn will decompose, returning valuable nutrients back into the soil. To make best use of this free, natural fertilizer: mow high (2 to 3"), do not remove more than 1/3 of the blade, and mow when grass is dry.
- 3. Choose the right fertilizer.** If a soil test shows your lawn needs nutrients, ask for natural organic slow-release fertilizers. These products more effectively deliver what plants need. Also, know how much and when and where to apply.



Lawn and Garden Tips to Help Curb Stormwater Pollution

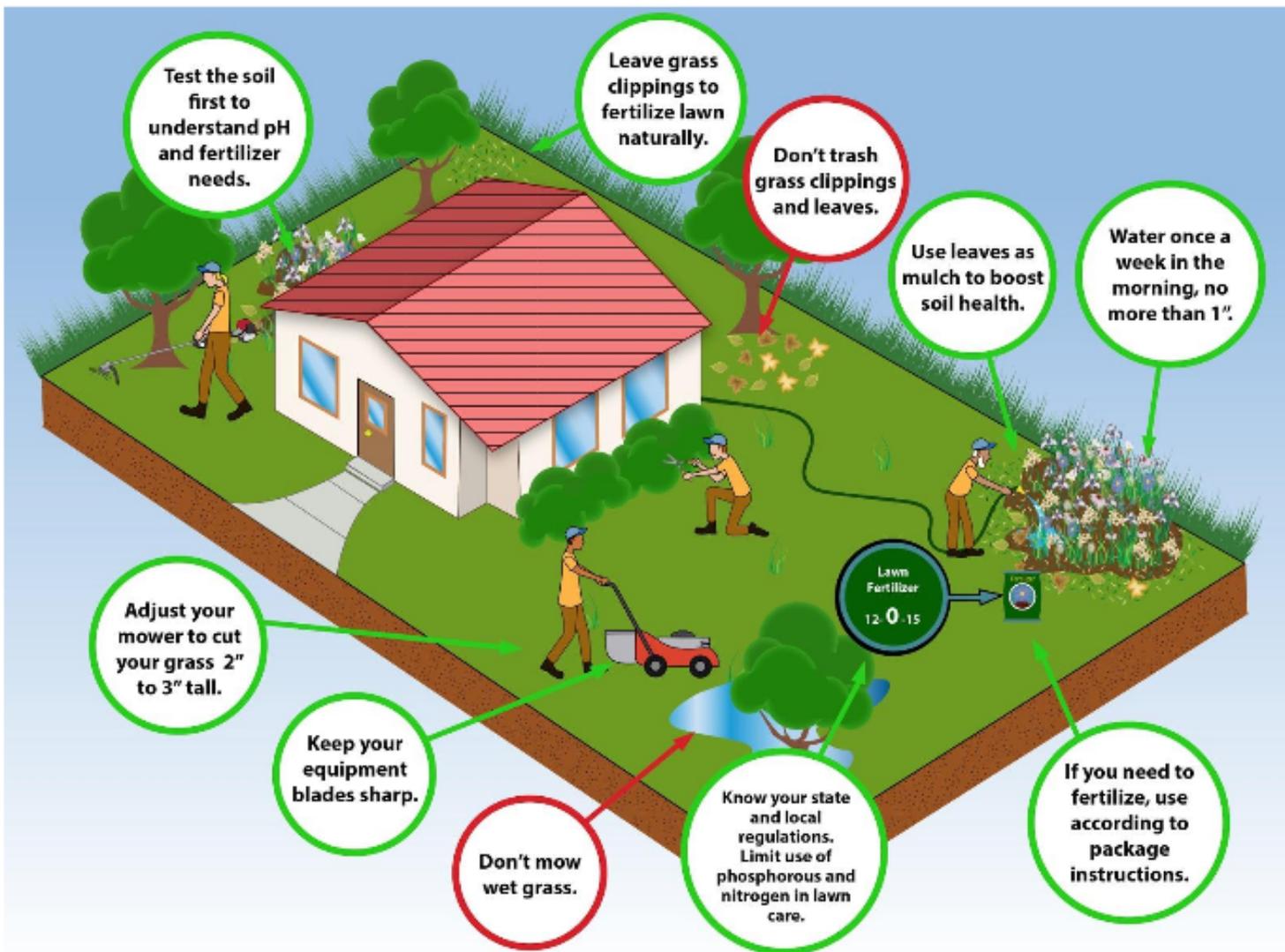


Image courtesy: Think Blue Massachusetts

Under Massachusetts law, only apply fertilizer with phosphorus if:

1. A soil test shows that phosphorus is needed; or
2. During the first growing season for a newly established lawn.

Did you know?

Mowing to a 2 to 3-inch grass height is optimal. Mowing lower reduces the amount of leaf area available for photosynthesis and in turn may reduce plant vigor. As cutting height is reduced, lawns become less tolerant of environmental stresses and more prone to invasion by weeds than lawns maintained at 2 to 3 inches.

Source: UMass Extension