



# Healthy Lawn CARE TIPS **SPRING 2007**



For further information...

Recommended by the Healthy Lawns and Gardens Technical Advisory Committee for Oakland and Wayne Counties.

Distributed by SOCWA, SE Oakland County Water Authority, and Rouge River watershed municipalities.

Earth-Friendly products — [www.healthylandscapes.com](http://www.healthylandscapes.com)  
 Oakland County MSU Extension Garden Hotline — 248-858-0902  
 Lawn care, composting, native plants, and rain garden information from SE Oakland County Water Authority — 248-288-5150 [www.socwa.org](http://www.socwa.org)



## Cut It High...and Let It Lie!

Leave 3 inches on the grass blade after cutting. Tall grass promotes root growth and shades out weeds. Let short clippings fall back into the lawn. Clippings are a source of nitrogen, so fertilizer can be reduced by 25% or more.



## Don't Guess... Soil Test!

March 31 – April 22, 2007

A soil test indicates nutrient levels already in your soil – a first step in determining how much and what type of fertilizer is needed for your lawn or garden.

MSU soil nutrient testing kits will be available through participating retailers from Saturday, March 31 through Sunday, April 23, 2007. The package price of \$15.00 includes basic nutrient analysis, pH, organic matter content, and delivery to the Michigan State University laboratory. The customer receives a written report, usually within 4 weeks. For a list of participating retailers and soil sampling instructions, contact SOCWA at 248-288-5150 or check [www.healthylandscapes.com](http://www.healthylandscapes.com).



## Do Not Fertilize Before Early May

Fertilized in the fall for a green lawn in the spring. Additional fertilizer before May is rarely needed. Do not spread fertilizer if the ground is frozen!



## Select Earth-Friendly Fertilizers

Earth-friendly fertilizers include products which meet these criteria:

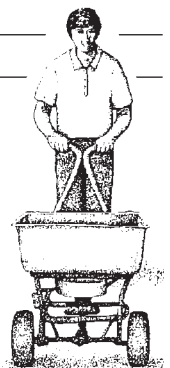
- 50% or more of the nitrogen in slow-release form
- Low or no phosphorus
- Pesticide free (*no weed-and-feed*).



Look for the bright green sticker on fertilizer bags at participating retailers. For a list of participating retailers, see [www.HealthyLandscapes.com](http://www.HealthyLandscapes.com).

## Examples of Recommended Lawn Fertilizers (partial list)

Corn Gluten Products	9 - 0 - 0
Clean Green Soy Fertilizer	7 - 0 - 0
Fertrell Lawn Fertilizers	9 - 1 - 4 or 8 - 1 - 8
Greenview - Low Phosphorus	26 - 4 - 12 or 29 - 2 - 10
Greenview - Zero Phosphorus	27 - 0 - 12 or 30 - 0 - 12
Lesco Professional Turf Fertilizer	32 - 0 - 10
Ringer Lawn Restore	10 - 2 - 6
Safer Lawn Restore	10 - 2 - 6
Soil Science	5 - 0 - 7
Turf Nurture	15 - 2 - 7



## Healthy Lawn Care Workshop

Thursday, April 12, 2007 • 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Featured speaker  
**Dr. Kevin Frank, Michigan State University**  
 Rochester Hills City Hall  
 1000 Rochester Hills Drive  
 (south off of Avon Rd. between Crook Rd. and Livernois Rd.)

To assure a seat, please register in advance. Telephone SOCWA at 248-288-5150 or e-mail [LFDean@aol.com](mailto:LFDean@aol.com).

# Additional Lawn Care *TIPS:*



## Water the Lawn to Minimize Stress

A green lawn in Michigan needs .5 to 1.5 inches of water per week. Light, frequent watering which reaches the roots of the grass is recommended by MSU researchers.



## Rake Compost Into the Lawn

Rake 1/2 inch of compost into an established lawn. Leave half of the grass blade exposed to sunlight and air. Compost adds microorganisms, nutrients and organic matter which build soil fertility and soil health.



## Sweep Up Fertilizer from Paved Surfaces

Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways can easily wash into storm drains, rivers and lakes. Sweep fertilizer from sidewalks back onto the lawn.



## Leave A "No Fertilizer" Buffer Zone Near Lakes and Rivers

The recommended width for "no fertilizer" buffers is 10 to 25 feet or more, depending on the slope. Instead of turf-grass, plant native grasses, tall wildflowers, and/or shrubs to trap pollutants and discourage Canadian geese.



## Reduce Fertilizer Amounts

Measure the actual lawn area you intend to fertilize – but do not include garden and pavement areas in the calculation. Read the fertilizer bag labels to determine the amount of fertilizer needed for the square footage of lawn. You may reduce the number of fertilizer applications if clippings are left on the lawn; if the lawn is in partial shade; or if the lawn is an established lawn.



## Avoid Weed-and-Feed Combination Products

Combination fertilizer and weed control products often add unnecessary herbicides to the landscape. Herbicides pose a threat to animals, plants and insects beyond the intended weeds or pests. Spot-treatment or hand-digging of weeds are better approaches for weed control.



## Practice IPM – Integrated Pest Management

Identify the weeds or insects of concern and select the least toxic control option. Read the label before buying any pesticide. Read the label again before using, storing or disposing of pesticide products – the label is the law.

For free information about the health and environmental impacts of specific pesticides, contact the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC): 1-800-858-7378.



## Do You Use A Lawn Service?

### Consider a Company That Offers the Healthy Lawn Care Option

The Healthy Lawn Care Program for Watershed Protection requires:

- Soil nutrient testing offered to customers.
- Fertilizer with slow-release nitrogen plus low-phosphorus or no phosphorus.
- Weed control through one or more of the following: zero pesticides, spot-treatment only, or one-time "rescue operation" to clean out major weeds.
- No more than 4 pounds of nitrogen applied to the lawn over the growing season.
- "No fertilizer" buffer near lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands (10 – 25 feet or more).
- Advice to the customer on proper maintenance.

### Lawn Care Services Endorsed Through the Healthy Lawn Care Program

(as of January 2007)

Atwood LawnCare, Inc.  
STERLING HEIGHTS, 586-939-3636

D&G Nature's Way, Inc.  
SOUTH LYON, 248-437-3759

Marshall Landscape, Inc.  
WARREN, 313-885-7272

Berns Landscaping Services, Inc.  
WARREN, 586-756-1145

D.T. Outdoor Services, L.L.C.  
FENTON, 810-714-3378

Mike's Tree Surgeons, Inc.  
TROY, 248-588-0202

Classic Turf, Inc.  
WARREN, 586-757-7700

Land Works Landscapes, Inc.  
WEST BLOOMFIELD, 248-669-3060

*For an updated list, call the Michigan Green Industry Association at 248-646-4992.*