



Landscape Maintenance

This section deals with the normal yard maintenance activities we all perform at our homes. Over watering, over fertilizing, improper herbicide application, and improper disposal of trimmings and clippings can all contribute to serious water pollution problems. Following the BMPs listed below will help alleviate pollutant runoff.

Required BMPs

- Follow the manufacturer's directions for mixing and applying herbicides, fungicides, and pesticides, and use them sparingly.

Suggested BMPs

- Use natural, organic soil amendments when possible. The excellent soil conditioning properties of the organic matter aid water retention in lighter soils and help to break up and aerate heavier soils, so roots can grow better and less watering is needed.
- Follow manufacturer's directions when applying fertilizers. More is not better, either for your lawn or for local water bodies. Never apply fertilizers over water or adjacent to ditches, streams, or other water bodies.
- Save water and prevent pollution problems by watering your lawn sensibly. Lawns and gardens typically need the equivalent of 1 inch of rainfall per week. Overwatering to the point of runoff can carry polluting nutrients to the nearest water body.
- Reduce the need for pesticides and fertilizers on lawns by improving the health of the soil. Aerating, thatching, and topdressing with compost will improve soil health and help desired grasses compete with weeds and moss.
- Use a mulching mower and mow higher to improve soil/grass health and reduce or eliminate pesticide use.
- Compost all yard clippings, or use them as mulch to save water and keep down weeds in your garden.
- Practice organic gardening and virtually eliminate the need to use pesticides and fertilizers.
- Pull weeds instead of spraying and get some healthy exercise, too. If you must spray, use the least toxic formulations that will get the job done.
- Plant native vegetation that is suited to Northwest conditions, they require less water and little to no fertilizers and pesticides.
- Invasive weeds and insect pests are a common nuisance to for yards. Consider generating an Integrated Pest Management Plan to control weeds and pests with the least amount of pollution potential. See "Use of Pesticides, Herbicides and Fertilizer" Handout.