

YOUR LAWN AND CHEMICALS

Lawn companies, such as TruGreen ChemLawn of Westbrook, fertilize lawns on several Tripp Lake properties. The company uses regular fertilizer containing phosphorus on these lawns and claims it isn't harmful to the lake. The buffers from lawn to lake can be as little as a few feet. Even 1/10 of a pound of phosphorus per 1000 sq. feet can pose a danger to a lake already at risk. Cumulatively, it can add much excess phosphorus to the lake. **The company will use phosphorus-free fertilizer on these lawns only if the owners request it. It's an excellent fertilizer to enhance turf and minimize the amount of pollutants entering the lake.** It appears many homeowners are not aware of the dangers of phosphorus to lake or why. The DEP tells us why.

Rain can wash phosphorus from fertilized lawns into lakes. Just one pound of phosphorus can produce 10,000 pounds of wet weeds and algae! Phosphorus is junk food for algae. Too much will turn lakes green, leaving unsightly, smelly scum, which only discourages recreational use, lowers property values and depresses local economy. Once in a lake, it's very expensive, if not impossible, to remove it.

Most soils in Maine have enough phosphorus to keep a lawn healthy. An application of lime will make even more phosphorus available to your lawn. A new lawn may need a small amount phosphorus to help root development. To see if your lawn needs phosphorus, **conduct a soil test before adding fertilizer.** Get your test kit at stores that sell phosphorus-free fertilizer, at U. of ME Cooperative Ext. Offices (581-3591), or on the web at <http://anlab.umesci.maine.edu>.


Use phosphorus-free fertilizer to keep lawns green and to keep lakes clean.

DOG OWNERS' LAKE ETIQUETTE

by Susan Barry

There is nothing worse than heading out to enjoy a walk or the water, only to step in "dog poop" along the way. All of us on the lake would enjoy your dogs even more if you would practice the courtesy of "picking up" after your pet. This is also good practice for a healthy lake.

Many thanks to those of you who already do so.



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