

Rules & Regulations

- In response to the amount of pollutants, Minnesota has laws restricting the use of phosphorus lawn fertilizers. Although phosphorus (P) is critical for the growth of all living plants and especially critical during the development of a new lawn, many lawns have adequate soil phosphorus and do not need further phosphorus fertilization.
- No person shall apply any commercial fertilizer to residential lawns or public properties in Saint Peter either liquid or granular, that contain phosphorus or other compounds such as phosphate, except when applied to newly established turf or lawn area in the first growing season. Once a lawn is developed and has sufficient roots, phosphorus (P) is no longer needed.
- No commercial fertilizer shall be applied when the ground is frozen. No person shall apply, spill, or otherwise deposit commercial fertilizer on an impervious surface. Any fertilizer applied, spilled, or deposited, either intentionally or accidentally on impervious surfaces shall be immediately and completely removed.

Minnesota Phosphorus Lawn Fertilizer LAW

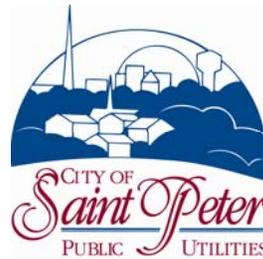
Fertilizers containing phosphorus cannot be used on lawns and turf in Minnesota unless one of the following exists:

- A soil test or plant tissue test shows a need for phosphorus.
- A new lawn is being established by seeding or laying sod.
- Phosphorus fertilizer is being applied on a golf course by trained staff.
- Phosphorus is being applied on farms growing sod for sale.

Test Soil First

If you think that your lawn needs phosphorus, test your soil first. For more information:

Call INFO-U at 1-612-624-2200 or visit <http://soiltest.coafes.umn.edu>



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Phosphorus Runoff Green Up Your Lawns... Not The Lakes and Rivers

Phosphorus ... Is a naturally occurring nutrient found in water, soil, and air. It helps stimulate plant growth and is essential for animal and plant life.



Why is it Important to Control Phosphorus in Lakes and Streams?

The storm drain in your street links directly to our lakes and rivers. The choices you make when caring for your lawn directly affect the water quality in lakes, rivers, and wetlands of any type.

A common cause of lake and river pollution is phosphorus. Naturally balanced levels of phosphorous promote increasing natural levels of growth in our lakes, rivers, and streams. When there is an excess amount of phosphorus introduced into waterways, some plant species, especially algae, experience rapid growth.

Overgrowth of algae clouds water, blocking sunlight from other plants and reduces oxygen to the fish in lakes and rivers resulting in aquatic life being killed or limiting their growth. Phosphorus turns lakes and rivers green. The result is unattractive, resulting in foul-smelling water that is bad for fish, wildlife, and humans.



Where Does Phosphorus Come From?

- Lawn Fertilizers
- Leaves and grass clippings
- Pesticides
- Exposed soil from construction and landscaping
- Pet and wildlife droppings
- Failing septic systems
- Automobile exhaust and car washing
- Phosphorus-based soaps, detergents, and chemicals

How Does Phosphorus Get Into The Lakes and Streams?

Phosphorus is carried into the lake by runoff from rainwater or outdoor water use. Land clearing exposes soil, allowing it to be washed away by rain. Hard or impervious surfaces, such as roads, rooftops, and patios, allow water to run-off quickly and carry phosphorus-containing pollutants, such as motor oils, fuels, and detergents, directly into lakes, streams, rivers, and storm drains that flow into these watersheds.

- Phosphorus attaches to soil. Keep soil from washing into the street.
- Sweep spilled fertilizer off paved surfaces.



Lawns and Gardens

- Fertilize only when necessary with a phosphorus-free fertilizer.
- Reduce the amount of grass in your landscape. Try native groundcovers that require less mowing and less fertilizer.
- Cover soil with plants - plants act like a natural sponge and filter, slowing down runoff and reducing the amount of pollutants that can reach the lake.



Look for the Middle Number

- A string of three numbers on a fertilizer bag shows its analysis-the middle number being phosphate (phosphorus) content. A “zero in the middle” means phosphorus-free fertilizer.

Soaps and Detergents

- When using soap and detergents outdoors, make sure that you use phosphorus-free products on a porous surface.

Your Car

- If you must wash your car at home, wash it with phosphorus-free products on a pervious surface such as the lawn or gravel in the driveway.
- Take your car to a local carwash that recycles the water to a sanitary sewer which then ends up in the wastewater treatment plant.

Waste

- Clean up pet waste and do not leave waste to decompose on your lawn.
- Carry a bag or some other type of material to clean up waste (see City of Saint Peter Pet Waste brochure for more information).