



You may be fertilizing Silver Lake! It's hard to imagine that a green, flourishing lawn could pose a threat to the environment, but the fertilizers you apply to your lawn are potential pollutants! If applied improperly or in excess, fertilizer can be washed off your property and end up in Silver Lake where it helps speed the growth of harmful algae.

FACT: More than 60 percent of water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from lawns and gardens, and failing septic tanks.

What's the problem with fertilizers?

Fertilizer is a "growing" problem for lakes, rivers, and streams, especially if it's not used carefully. If you use too much fertilizer or apply it at the wrong time, it can easily wash off your lawn or garden into storm drains and then flow into lakes or streams. Just like in your garden, fertilizer in lakes and streams makes plants grow. In water bodies, extra fertilizer can mean extra algae and aquatic plant growth. Too much algae causes water quality problems and makes boating, fishing, and swimming unpleasant. As algae decay, it uses up oxygen in the water that fish and other wildlife need.

Clean Water Tips: How can you fertilize and help keep our waters clean?

- Use fertilizer sparingly. Many plants don't need as much fertilizer or need it as often as you might think.
- Use non-phosphorus fertilizers which are available from most lawn care companies and home improvement stores.
- Don't fertilize before a rain storm.
- Consider using organic fertilizers. They release nutrients more slowly.
- Have your soil tested before applying fertilizers to your lawn and gardens. You may not need to add any fertilizer. Ask your current landscaping provider or The Summit Soil and Water Conservation District offers testing kits for \$12.00. For more information, visit www.summitswcd.org or call 330-929-2871.

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