



MINNESOTA WATER  
LET'S KEEP IT CLEAN

## Spring Lawn Care Tip Sheet

[www.cleanwatermn.org](http://www.cleanwatermn.org)

The snow is melting and spring rains are here! All that runoff is funneling down streets and alleys into storm sewers that carry it to our lakes, streams and wetlands. Here's how to protect Minnesota waterways this spring:

### Keep Your Spring Runoff Clean:

- Remove pet waste and trash from streets, sidewalks and driveways and put it into the garbage.
- Clean gutters regularly. Put leaves in your compost pile or bag for collection with other yard trimmings. Sweep up road dirt and place it in the garbage.
- Direct water from your downspouts away from your house and paved surfaces and onto your lawn.

### Restore Your Lawn:

- Remove debris and yard trimmings. Prepare for garbage or yard trimming collection.
- Reseed bare spots. If spots are caused by salt, reseed with a salt-tolerant grass mix.
- Lightly mulch newly seeded areas with straw and keep moist for three or four weeks.
- Control soil-erosion around your home. When left bare soil washes away easily with rain and carries phosphorus with it. Soil erosion can be prevented by keeping soil covered with vegetation or mulch.
- The soil under most metro-area lawns contains ample amounts of phosphorus and in most cases applying additional phosphorus in lawn fertilizer is unnecessary. Find out what your lawn needs by obtaining a soil test through the University of Minnesota Soil Test Lab (612-625-3101) or another similar lab.

### Keep Lawn Care Products Out of Runoff:

- Use phosphorus-free fertilizer. Minnesota's Phosphorus Lawn Fertilizer Law went into effect on January 1, 2005. The law states that Minnesotans cannot use fertilizer containing phosphorus for general lawn care.
- Always read and follow label directions when using lawn care products and disposing of their containers.
- Don't apply lawn care products to frozen ground—wait until the grass starts growing.
- Sweep up and reuse any lawn care products that fall on streets, sidewalks and driveways.

*For additional tips about how to protect Minnesota's waterways while caring for your yard, visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Web site at [www.mda.state.mn.us](http://www.mda.state.mn.us) and click on the Water and Land section's Lawn Care and Water Quality pages.*