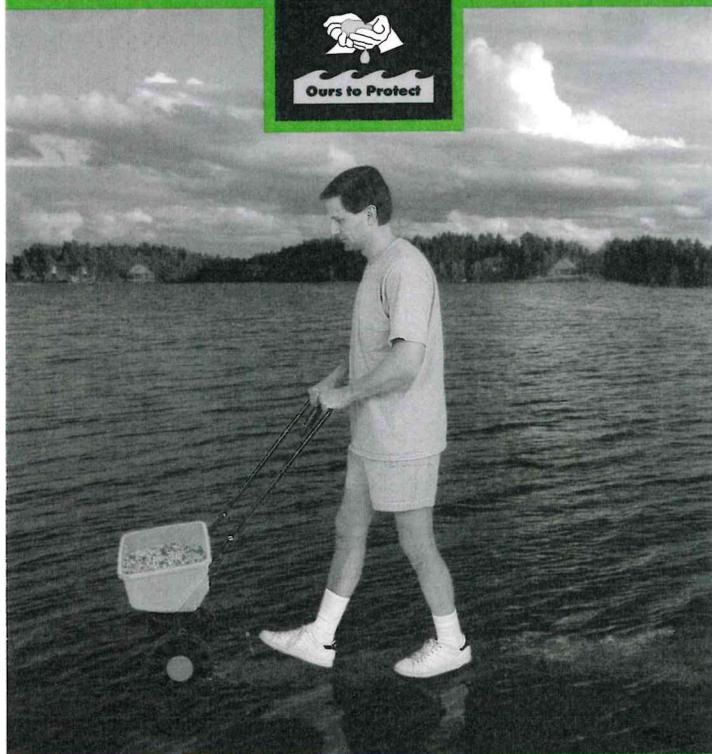


# Remember, you're not just fertilizing your lawn

Our Water. Our Future.



## Fertilize caringly

Did you know that healthy lawn care is a good way to protect lakes and rivers? Proper fertilization is important for a healthy lawn. When fertilizer is put down at the right time and in the right way, it strengthens lawns. A healthy lawn protects water by holding soil and pollutants and minimizing the need for pesticides.

Improper fertilization (e.g., leaving fertilizer on paved surfaces, using improper type, applying on frozen ground) harms our water. Improper fertilization causes it to get into storm drains in streets, which empty into lakes and rivers. Fertilizer in lakes and rivers causes algae to grow, which uses oxygen that fish need.

Remember . . . "keep it on the lawn!" Follow the tips on the back of this card for a healthy lawn and healthy water.

## Fertilize caringly

**Fertilize in the fall.** Want a vibrant spring lawn? Fertilize in the fall. Fall is the best time for plants to absorb nutrients and develop a strong root system.

**Be patient in the spring.** No need to hurry – fertilizer you put down in the fall is at work. Wait until the second mowing before adding fertilizer. Then you can be sure the ground isn't frozen and the grass can properly use the fertilizer.



**Keep it on the lawn.**

Keep fertilizer on the lawn. If you do get it on the pavement, sweep it back onto the lawn.

**Light, frequent watering.**

The amount of water used is based on the desired look and use for

your lawn. If you water, consider light, frequent watering. Cool the grass with shorter periods of light water during the hotter parts of the day.

**Use a fertilizer meant for the lawn.** Some fertilizers are meant for more than lawns ("all purpose" or "lawn and garden"). These contain too much phosphorus (often displayed as 10-10-10 on the bag). Use a lawn fertilizer with Nitrogen (N) to Phosphorus ratio (P) of 5 to 1, or greater.

**Follow directions.** Use a spreader and follow directions. This ensures that the right amount of fertilizer is being used.

**Mow high and return the clippings.** Make your lawn care cheaper and easier by mowing high (3 inches) and leave the clippings for nutrients. A tall lawn promotes root growth and shades out weeds.

**Make fertilizer-free zones.** Keep distance between fertilizer and areas such as rivers, lakes, or storm drains. This will protect these areas from unnecessary fertilizer.

Find out more at [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)

Brought to you by SEMCOG and the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water

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