

Spring Months : March, April, May

- ✦ Clean patios and walkways with a broom instead of a water stream.
- ✦ Sweep up trash and leaves that have fallen over winter. Decomposing organic matter robs the lakes and streams of oxygen that fish need to breathe, and trash can cause health problems for both people and animals.
- ✦ Wash your car on your lawn with a non-phosphate soap, or take it to a car wash where the water will not be drained down the storm sewer.
- ✦ Recycle motor oil and household chemicals at approved facilities – most of them are poisonous – never dump them in any lake, stream, or storm sewer structure.
- ✦ Repair automobile leaks immediately. Also, repair work should be done inside, or any spills should be cleaned up immediately to prevent them from being washed into the lakes and streams.
- ✦ Do not store chemicals outside, where the rain could wash them into the lakes and streams.
- ✦ Do not over-fertilize! Have your soil tested (you can contact the County Extension Office at 847-818-2901 for information on how to get such a test done) to ensure what type of fertilizer you need, you might not even need any! Mulching your grass-clippings instead of bagging them can reduce the amount of fertilizer you need. The best time to apply fertilizer is actually in the Fall, as Spring applications can result in shallow, unhealthy root systems.
- ✦ Limit pesticides to be used as a last resort, and to very specific area. Not only will you kill the pests, but also many beneficial insects that would otherwise prey on them! Try to choose native, disease-resistant plant varieties and rotate annual plantings to disrupt plant-specific pests.
- ✦ Limit the use of herbicides. Turf grasses are very competitive plants, and keeping the lawn mowed at a proper height (2½ to 3 inches) will encourage a healthier, more drought and weed-resistant lawn (do not remove more than 1/3rd of the leaf height). Till or hand-weed instead of using chemicals.
- ✦ Mulching will cut down on weed growth, reduce erosion and retain soil moisture; healthy plants are more effective at defending themselves, so you'll need less pesticide!
- ✦ Pick up after your pets. Pet waste is filled with bacteria which can be dangerous to people and animals alike. Additionally, decaying waste consumes oxygen from the water, and can release ammonia – both of which can result in killed fish.