

Summer Months : June, July, August

- ✦ Do not over water: Limit the amount of watering to supplement rain-water -- one inch per week is sufficient for most turf grass lawns. Water during the morning hours to conserve water and to reduce the amount of run-off generated.
- ✦ 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!
- ✦ 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. Also, a septic system will *not* remove such chemicals, and they should never be dumped down the drain.
- ✦ 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.
- ✦ During construction, bare soil can be washed off the site and into lakes, muddying and polluting the water. During dry spells, dust can be kicked up by construction activity, or whipped up by the wind, becoming both an air pollutant as well as a water pollutant when it is deposited into lakes. Windbreaks, mulching, and other erosion control measures will help keep your soil on your property and out of your lake.
- ✦ Septic systems that are not functioning properly may contaminate drinking water, or discharge untreated effluent through seepage into nearby lakes or streams. This can lead to bacterial contamination, overgrowth of algae, and depletion of oxygen within the lake itself -- endangering fish and other aquatic life, as well as making the lake hazardous for people!
- ✦ Do not over-fertilize! Have your soil tested (you can contact the County Extension Office at 847-818-3900 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 areas. 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 (2 1/2 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!
- ✦ 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.