



WATERSHED GREEN CORNER

This article is brought to you by RI NEMO - Thank You!

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Make Smart Moves as the Seasons Change

With summer sailing by and fall looming, there are a few things you can do to maximize benefits to your lawn and landscape while making this annual transition.

Late summer is vacation time for many families, and with those get-aways come last-minute checklists of items to do before taking off.

If you have automatic sprinklers for your lawn, please turn them off before you leave. Think of all the water that would be wasted if it rained the entire time you were gone! Most established lawns only need about one inch of water per week, including rainfall, so chances are good that your lawn will be just fine while you're away.

If you can't take time off or simply take a Rhode Island "day-cation", remember these all-season recommendations:

Recycle Rainwater

Rain barrels, cisterns, rain gardens – even downspout extenders – can be a great way to deflect roof runoff from hard surface (impervious) areas, where it picks up pollutants on its way to local waterways. Recycling water also helps raise groundwater levels which increases the water supply for local wells. It also provides life-sustaining water to streams and rivers where the trout will thank you.

Water Wisely

Outdoor water conservation reduces the potential for contaminants to wind up in local waters: monitor your water use: don't water in the heat of the day; limit watering to 1 inch per week; and make sure sprinklers don't hit paved surfaces. Consider letting your lawn go dormant, as established lawns will come back with fall's wet weather.



Lawn care becomes more sophisticated year-by-year, but there are some elementary rules that are always worth repeating:

A Clip Job

As you no doubt have heard from your parents or nearest and dearest, "That lawns not going to mow itself." That doesn't mean that you should furiously shave it down to the dirt! Instead, utilize this advice to maintain a healthy lawn and prevent harmful runoff at the same time:

Mow High

Ideally, never cut off more than a third of the grass blade, leaving it about 2½ to 3 inches tall. It will look marvelous, even if you can't putt on it.

Leave Clippings on the Lawn

This not only reduces your fertilizer need by 50 percent, but improves your soil quality. A two-fer! Do not put yard waste into wetlands, where it will unsafely raise nutrient levels, and can clog the natural flow of water through the wetland. Two wrongs definitely don't make it your right to dump yard waste wherever looks convenient.

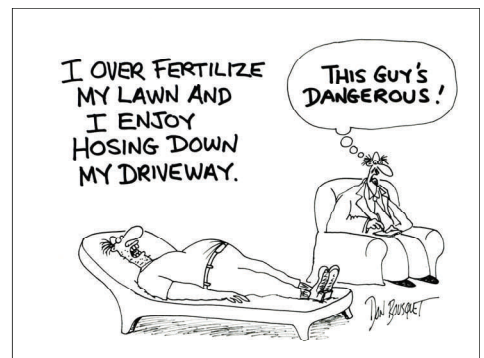
Fertilize in the Fall

If you have to fertilize your lawn at all, do it during the period from September through mid October. Most lawns need little or no fertilizer, and once just before the leaves turn colors is the ideal time as this is when grass is building strong roots for next year.

Smaller and Slower is Better

Using more fertilizer is worse, not better. Also, use slow-release fertilizer, which allows nutrients and phosphorous to stay in the soil as food for plants, rather than run off into waterways or leach into groundwater. Liquid fertilizer is not slow-release, even if it came to you dry and you were the one to mix it with water.

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Make Smart Moves *Continued from previous page*

Location, Location, Location

If you live near a river or stream, your main goal should be reducing the amount of phosphorous from fertilizers that reach the water. If you drink well water, or live near coastal waters – which is pretty much everyone in the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed – your main concern should be preventing too much nitrogen from getting into drinking supplies or Little Narragansett Bay.

Sweep Up Spilled Fertilizer

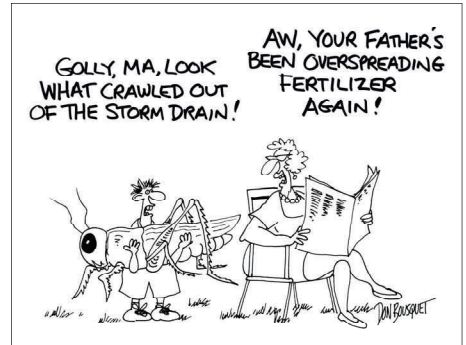
Anything spilled on pavement is likely to get washed into storm drains, so be sure to sweep spills back onto the lawn (where it can help) and don't hose down paved surfaces to clean them, as this causes polluted runoff (which can hurt).

Create a Buffer Zone

Do not use fertilizers (or pesticides) within 75 feet (minimum) of a waterway or wetland. Here pollutants can easily reach surface waters and cause immediate damage.

An excellent source of information is the University of Rhode Island's Healthy Landscapes Web site, at: <http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/> In its Healthy Lawncare and Renovation section, also look for a box that can link you to an extremely useful guide on fertilizing. This information was developed from new research specifically targeting the New England region, and is for folks who care about their landscape and minimizing stormwater pollution. (That's you, right?)

All of the above are very simple steps you can take to end up with a naturally robust and resilient lawn – one that's safe for your family and can save you money as well. For more information and ways to help prevent stormwater pollution in your neighborhood, go to: www.ristormwatersolutions.org.



Fishing Fun For EVERYONE!

As you probably already know, July is Learn To Fish Month at WPWA and thanks to some dedicated volunteers and cooperating summer weather, WPWA hosted two learn-to-fish events. The first, which took place on July 15th, was specifically for learners ages 4 to 14 and focused on the basics of fishing. The second, held on the 29th, for learners ages 14 and up, taught the art of Fly Fishing.

The first event, that took place at the Carolina Trout Pond, met each of the eleven kids and teens that partici-





Audrey Craig checks that her line is stretched out to the "11 o'clock" position.

pated with success, as each one caught a fish! It was great to see everyone working together.

The second, held at the WPWA campus, had only five participants, which ended up being just right so that everyone had enough room to stretch out their long fly lines.

Special Thanks To All Who Helped make these programs a lot of fun

- Jay Boyer
- Mal Rochford
- Kim Sullivan
- Al Truchon
- Al Williams
- Hope Valley Bait & Tackle
- DEM's Aquatic Resources Education Program

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