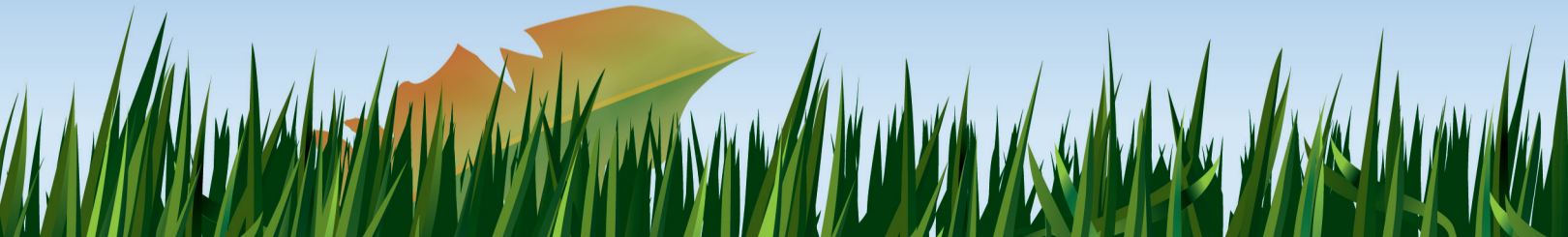


# What's on your lawn?

Did you know that most grasses should be fertilized in fall rather than spring? Using the right amount at the right time saves money and keeps harmful nutrients out of local streams.



## Healthy waterways begin in your backyard.

Improper or excessive lawn fertilization is a significant source of nutrient runoff pollution, the most severe problem facing local waterways across Virginia and in the Chesapeake Bay. Runoff that carries excess nitrogen increases the growth of algae and reduces water clarity, which stresses underwater plant and animal life. The health of Virginia's waterways begins in your backyard.



## Tips to keep our waterways clean

- Landscape your home with conservation in mind. Use native plants that require less maintenance and water. Cover bare spots in your yard to prevent erosion. Use permeable paving surfaces, such as wood decks, bricks and concrete lattice, to let water soak into the ground.
- Do not dispose of oil or other waste into storm drains. One gallon of used oil can pollute two million gallons of water. Take the oil to a recycling center or gas station to be recycled.
- Be a pooper-scooper. Stormwater carries litter, pet waste and other pollutants

directly into waterways. Animal waste may contain harmful bacteria, viruses and nutrients that can pollute waterways.

- If you have a septic system, properly maintain it. Faulty septic systems can pollute local groundwater. Septic tanks should be pumped out every three to five years.

For more tips on yard care, go to [www.dcr.virginia.gov/toolboxcit.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/toolboxcit.shtml) and download a copy of *A Virginian's Year-round Guide to Lawn Care* or *Tips for Keeping Your Lawn Green and Virginia's Waters Clean*.