

Know Where It Flows

Simple Ways to Keep Our Water Crystal Clean

A primer for proper lawn care and
septic system maintenance.



It's Your Water. Help Protect It.

Care About Your Home. Care About Your Water.

Everyone wants clean water. But the choices we make today when maintaining lawns and septic tanks can adversely affect our water resources tomorrow.

Rain washes excess fertilizers and pesticides into our water. And pollution from leaky septic tanks can find its way into our water too.

The good news is that you can help. And it's easy to do.

This brochure provides simple ways you can nurture a beautiful lawn and maintain your septic tank while protecting Florida's environment.

When we all do our part, we can keep our water crystal clean.



Know Where It Flows

Southwest Florida
Water Management District

WATERMATTERS.ORG · 1-800-423-1476

Your Checklist for Clean Water

Small Steps Make a Big Difference

Fertilizers and Pesticides

Most people put a lot of effort into their lawns. But too much of a good thing will actually hurt your lawn and the environment.

Here are a few simple things you can do to get the lawn you want while protecting the environment that we all enjoy:



Plant the Right Plant in the Right Place

Plants native or adapted to Florida need little water or fertilization. Almost any plant will survive in your landscape if you plant it in the right place. Ask a local landscape professional or your county extension agent to recommend the proper plants and grasses for your area and find out the best times of the year for applying fertilizers and pesticides.



Be a Know-It-All

Learn to use the information printed on the labels of the lawn care products you buy. Using the right amount, the right way, during the right times of the year will accomplish your goal of a healthy lawn and a cleaner environment. Too much fertilizer or pesticide actually encourages certain insects and diseases and increases maintenance needs.



Find Your Comfort Zone

Maintain a 10-foot unfertilized buffer area around water bodies and sinkholes. This will help prevent the fertilizer from directly entering the surface and ground water.



Check the Weather

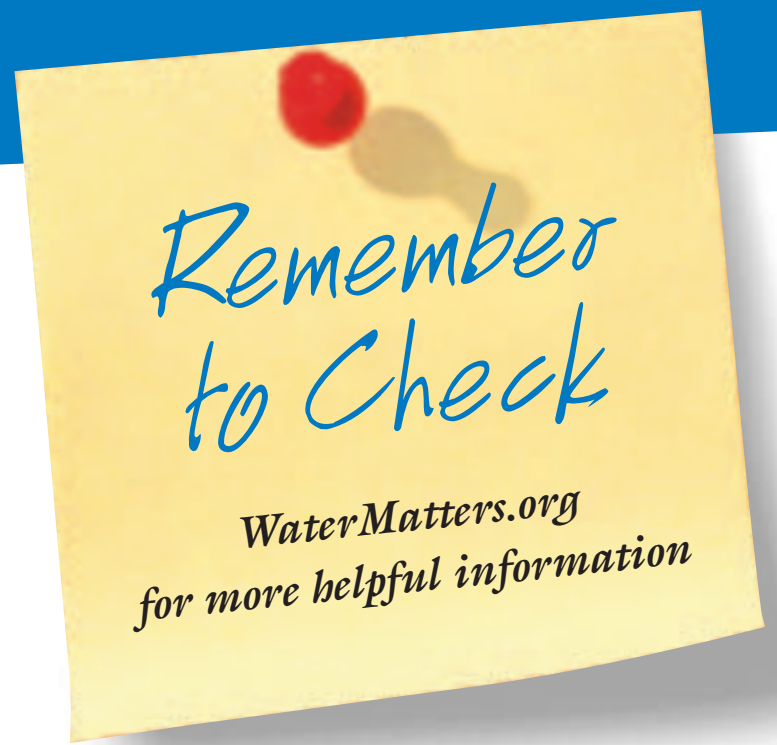
The plants and grasses you're treating with fertilizers or pesticides benefit only when the nutrients are kept in the root zone. Heavy rain can ruin your hard work and wash the chemicals away from the roots — and into our rivers, lakes, and ground water.



Train Your Lawn

Proper watering conserves water, reduces runoff, produces healthy roots, and trains your lawn to be more drought tolerant. Watering too frequently wastes water and fertilizers, may cause disease and weed problems, and can make your lawn and landscape more susceptible to drought.

This information will be made available in accessible formats upon request. Please contact the Communications Department at (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only), ext. 4757, TDD only at 1-800-231-6103 (FL only).



Septic Tank Maintenance

Septic tanks are out of sight and out of mind — until there's a problem. Proper operation and maintenance of your septic system can save you money, protect your family's health, and protect area streams and rivers.

Here are a few simple things you can do to maintain your septic system and help prevent water pollution:



Get a Checkup

Inspect your septic tank at least every 2 to 3 years and pump as recommended. This will help prevent tanks and drain fields from becoming clogged, losing their ability to filter waste.



Think Before You Flush

Paper, plastics, diapers, and cigarette filters do not decompose. These materials clog the system and increase maintenance needs.



Don't Compound the Problem

Avoid using septic tank cleaning compounds. They do not help the system function better and can impair the tank's efficiency and damage the drain field.



Garbage In, Garbage Out

Kitchen scraps and other throwaway items (such as coffee grounds) deposited in garbage disposals are an additional burden on septic systems. They increase the load of solids into the tank, decrease capacity, and shorten the interval between pumpings. Simply dispose of kitchen scraps in the trash. Or you can set up a compost pile at a convenient spot in your yard.

We're Here to Help

If you would like a presentation to your school or group, contact Rivard Reding at (352) 476-4941. (Citrus County only)

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