

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Lawn and Garden

Listed below are some simple steps you can use to protect your drinking water:

- Follow directions when applying fertilizers and pesticides. Read the label. Never apply near water or when there is wind.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers in moderation. Instead of using chemicals, consider pulling weeds or infected leaves by hand or using some type of biological control such as ladybugs.
- Properly diagnose plant problems before treatment. Severe cold or heat, waterlogging or drought, and carelessly applied herbicides can injure plants and cannot be fixed by pesticide application.
- Water your lawn effectively and conserve water. Water thoroughly once a week instead of watering lightly everyday. Over watering promotes shallow root growth making your lawn less hardy. Apply enough water to penetrate the soil 6 to 8 inches. In areas of slope and heavy clay, apply water slowly to prevent runoff.
- Water in the early morning hours to give plants enough moisture to face the sunny day and to avoid evaporation. Use mulch in gardens to retain moisture.
- Use food scraps, yard trimmings, and other organic waste to create a compost pile. Compost is a rich soil amendment that can help increase water retention, decrease erosion, and replace chemical fertilizers.
- Keep your lawn mower and other equipment in efficient operating condition by performing regular maintenance. Use manual tools when possible.
- The following websites were used as sources for this document. Please visit them for more information:

<http://www.epa.gov/epahome/home.htm>

http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/lawn_garden/

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/envirohort/426-723/426-723.html>

