

## March

### Spring into Better Lawn Care-Limit Phosphorous in Yards

By Jacquelyn Buck

This year, Allen County Partnership for Water Quality (ACPWQ) is challenging Allen County residents to slow down before they go buy their fertilizer for the year. First, we ask for you to decide what your goal for your lawn is. Is it to have a uniformed manicure look? Low maintenance? Be an enriching space for children and pets to play and explore? No answer is the wrong answer, but there is not one blanket solution for everyone to use to reach their goal. Make choices that help you reach **your** goal.

Next, it is important to understand what your lawn truly needs through doing a soil test. Kits can be purchased at most garden centers. By taking this measure, homeowners are able to ensure they get the right nutrients for their soils, helping to promote desired plant growth. If you add too much fertilizer, it can actually be detrimental to plant growth. Adding the wrong kind of fertilizer is likely to leave you frustrated for there will be hardly any noticeable differences, besides how much money you spent.

Once soil needs are unveiled, purchase the fertilizer that will help you reach your goal and is appropriate for your land. We promote low to no phosphorus fertilizers. When washed into waterways, fertilizers containing phosphorus can promote algae blooms and poor water quality, and most of the time are not needed for you to reach your lawn goal.

Lastly, make sure to sweep sidewalks and driveways clean of any excess fertilizer that landed on them. Fertilizers will do you no good if it is not on your lawn, meaning you miss out on those nutrients and wasted money. Plus this excess fertilizer is significantly more likely to make their way into our rivers, degrading our water quality.

So this March, do your part and spring into better lawn care by doing a simple soil test and adding limited to no phosphorous fertilizers to your lawn to help improve the water quality in your area!

