

# You are the Solution to Water Pollution

Your property lies within a watershed, and runoff from rain storms doesn't obey property lines. The rainwater that falls on your property flows across it and eventually reaches a stream or river along with all the water from other properties in the same watershed.



It is important to remember that water is all connected. The puddle where your child plays today could be someone's drinking water tomorrow. Likewise, water you use returns to a stream and has an impact on communities downstream.

Simple choices such as how you care for your lawn matter. Your lawn has a direct impact on river water quality, because rainwater runoff can carry fertilizer and other chemicals applied to your lawn and garden directly into a river or stream. Those chemicals can kill fish and pollute the water.



Use responsible water practices today so you can protect our water quality for tomorrow.

***For more information please visit:***

**Fort Wayne City Utilities**

[www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities/utilities](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities/utilities)

OR

**Allen County Partnership for Water Quality**

[www.acwater.org](http://www.acwater.org)

# Reduce Impervious Surfaces

Roofs, driveways, concrete patios and other hard surfaces block rainwater from filtering back through the soil and replenishing groundwater.

Instead of adding more hard surfaces on your property try wooden decks, landscaped areas, pervious driveways, and mulched paths. These options provide more areas that let rainwater runoff soak into the ground.

Collect rainwater in rain barrels for later use in your garden. Better yet, add a "rain garden" to your yard. Once they're established they are fairly low maintenance. It's a great strategy for soil and stormwater alike. It's easy to be a "green gardener"!

# Composting

Composting is a controlled way to break down organic matter and create a rich natural fertilizer. It can enhance soil texture, and the ability to absorb air and water. Compost also suppresses weed growth and reduces erosion.

## Recipe for Compost

- 1 part "green"= fresh grass clippings, garden plants, fruits, and vegetable scraps (no meat, dairy, or fat)
- 3 parts "brown"= dried leaves and plants, branches, and woody materials
- Mix together, moisten, and turn occasionally until dark and crumbly (several weeks to a year).

Use the compost around trees, shrubs, perennials, and house plants to deter weeds, improve soil structure and retain moisture.

# GREEN LANDSCAPING

## Lawn Care Practices to Protect Water Quality



# What Can I Do?

## Test Your Soil

Don't waste time and money using fertilizer your lawn may not need!

Test you soil for nutrients and pH to determine what kind of care your lawn and garden need to be healthy.

You can purchase a home test for soil pH, nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium at a garden center or hardware store near you.

## Choose Native Plants

Native plants are well-suited to their area, requiring less water, fertilizer, and pesticides than other species. Their lower maintenance and high conservation value make them a good choice for your yard.

**Ask your local garden center for some native plant choices.**

## Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are landscaped areas ideal for holding and processing stormwater. They are effective at removing excess nutrients, chemicals, and sediment from rainwater runoff. Plus they can be utilized in decorating your lawn!



## Use Biosolids & Compost

Fort Wayne City Utilities produces and distributes biosolids— a nutrient rich by-product of the wastewater treatment process that is then mixed with composted leaves.

When biosolids are applied to the land before planting, they provide nutrients essential for plant growth and can reduce the need for chemical fertilizer.

At home, biosolids can be used as a fertilizer and soil amendment.

## Biosolids, Lime, & Yard Waste Recycling

Fort Wayne's Biosolids Handling Facility  
6202 Lake Avenue  
(260) 427-5535

Republic Services  
6231 MacBeth Road  
(260) 442-3174

## Yard-waste Composting Site guidelines

<u>Acceptable:</u>	<u>Unacceptable:</u>
Garden Waste	Construction Debris
Leaves	Cement
Grass	Dirt
Prunings	Brush
Weeds	Fruit from Trees
Vines	Lumber
Brush	Tires
	Wooden Pallets
	Wood Fence
	Bushes with roots

## Water Smarter

Water deeply to promote strong root growth, and water in the early morning to avoid evaporation. Also by using a rain barrel, a catchment system that collects rainwater from your roof, you can save money!



Using less water and water collected at your home means less chemical runoff and soil erosion giving us **cleaner rivers**.

## Grasscycling

The average American spends about 70 hours and around \$200 a year maintaining their lawn. However, both the cost and time can be greatly reduced by grasscycling.

Grasscycling is the practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn after mowing. So instead of bagging, raking, and hauling grass clippings one can simply leave it on their lawn.

In addition to saving time, it also saves homeowners money. By allowing the grass clippings to biodegrade naturally, nitrogen can be reintroduced back into the soil.

Best conditions for grasscycling:

- \* Mow when the grass is dry to the touch
- \* Keep the mower blade sharp
- \* Cut off no more than 1/3 the length of the grass