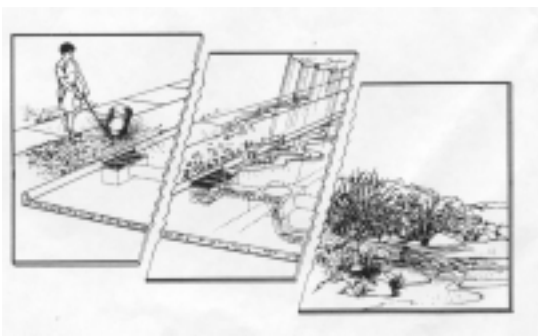


Did you know that there are two distinct sewer systems running through Livingston? The first type, storm sewers, carry the rain water that runs down the street; and the other is a sanitary system designed to drain your sinks and bathrooms.

Stormwater runoff

Many businesses and industries are regulated by stormwater runoff laws, but homeowners are not. The water that runs down the storm drains empties into our local streams and brooks (Canoe & Bear Brooks) and into the Passaic River, UNTREATED. The first rush of water from a rainstorm picks up much of the debris, litter and other pollutants that have settled on the land surface. This means any material accidentally spilled on your driveway, or intentionally used on your lawn, may wind up in the runoff. The following should never be dumped down storm drains, road gutters, or catch basins: *motor oil, pet waste, grass trimmings, leaves, debris and hazardous chemicals of any kind.*



What happens to my wash water?

Water that is discharged from your household drains through the sanitary sewers is treated at the local sewage treatment plant before it is discharged into the environment. However, this does not mean that contaminants do not reach the environment. There are certain chemicals, such as solvents, motor oil, paints and antifreeze that should not be poured down the sink. Instead, they should be saved for a household hazardous waste collection. Read the manufacturer's directions for clean-up and disposal information.

The Essex County Utilities Authority holds a household hazardous waste day annually at 99 West Bradford Avenue in Cedar Grove. Call the ECUA for more information.

I understand that chemicals are not always good for the environment, but I want a beautiful, lush green lawn. What can I do?

A healthy lawn is aesthetically pleasing and environmentally beneficial because it can help prevent erosion and act as a filter for rainwater from roofs, downspouts and driveways. To increase the volume of rainwater that filters into the ground, use materials like brick, gravel, flat stones, or wood chips when installing sidewalks, patios, or walkways.

Here are some ways to have a green lawn and a safe environment:

Monitor the lawn

Identify problems: Is there sufficient sunlight and air? Are there diseases (e.g. dollar spot, slime mold) or pest infestation (e.g. chinch bugs, web worms)?

Solution: treat only the problems that exist.

Mowing

Set mower height at 3-4 inches. Taller grass chokes out weeds like crabgrass. To prevent the soil from compacting, rotate the mowing pattern and mow the lawn once a week. Leave the grass clippings! They provide important nutrients like nitrogen and reduce the need for commercial fertilizer.

Test soil for fertility and pH

Good soil encourages healthy plants and better water management. Have the soil tested each year to determine whether your lawn needs nutrients, lime, or both. You can buy soil test kits at your local garden center or through the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service (RCE); call the Master Gardener Hotline for more information. Lime should be added yearly, ideally in the fall, unless pH tests indicate otherwise. (Use dolomitic limestone, not hydrolyzed.) If you must fertilize, apply organic fertilizers in the fall. These are made from seaweed, bone meal, processed chicken or cow manure. Avoid

application before a heavy rain since they can runoff into our local streams and brooks.

Plant proper varieties of grass

Choose appropriate grasses for your soil and light conditions. Overseed in the spring and fall to establish a strong turf. You can contact the RCE for more information.

Aerate the soil

Aeration helps prevent weeds and reduces soil compaction. Core aeration is ideal. Aerators can be purchased or rented.

Remove thatch

Thatch is the accumulated dead material at the base of the grass. Rake the lawn seasonally by hand or rent a thatching machine. Dethatch only if thatch is 2 inches or more. Organic fertilizers help break down thatch naturally.

Reduce weeds

Identify weeds and establish your tolerance levels. Hand dig weeds until the competition by grass plants eliminates most weeds.

Watering

Consider drought tolerant grass species or let your lawn turn brown in the summer. The lush green color will return with the fall rains.

Lawn service

Choose a service that employs Integrated Pest Management (IPM), strategies that reduce dependency on chemicals. These companies will most likely spot treat problem areas, and only use chemicals as needed.

My flower garden is subject to invasion by a variety of insects. Is there a way to deal with these pests without using large amounts of pesticides?

The term pesticide is commonly used to describe herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides. As you might expect, anything designed to kill "pests" can threaten water quality and may be harmful if misused. To safely apply these chemicals

special care should be taken to read and follow all the directions and warnings that are printed on the labels.

Chemical use can be kept to a minimum by using IPM. This offers you and your family reduced exposure to pesticides, economic savings, and a healthier environment. To reduce the number of pests, attract birds, "nature's insect control," by planting proper trees, shrubs and plants like bittersweet, crabapple, flowering dogwood, holly and red cedar. Beneficial insects such as ladybugs and praying mantises kill aphids and tomato hornworms and other pests.

Use plants that naturally repel insects such as marigolds, nasturtiums, geraniums and pansies. Instead of blanket chemical spraying, remove the diseased portions of the plant, hand weed, and destroy problematic insects.

What landscaping techniques can I use to decrease dependence on pesticides?

Choose native species of grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees. They are more drought resistant and require minimal care. Select plants that are appropriate for the climate conditions in your yard: shaded or sunny areas; wet or dry soil. Plant ground covers like pachysandra or periwinkle in shaded areas where grass is difficult to establish and maintain.

Are there safe alternatives to use if all else fails?

Use biological pesticides specific to the pest such as Bt for leaf-eating worms and caterpillars and milky spore powder for Japanese beetles, grubs and other closely related grub cousins. Other botanical pesticides are pyrethrum and rotenone. Use beneficial nematodes (worms) to control soil pests. However, only use pesticides registered by EPA for use against the specific problem/pest that you have. Safer Soap brand natural insect spray can be used indoors on houseplants as well as in the garden and is environmentally friendly.

Horticultural oil sprays can be used during the dormant (usually late fall/winter) season to control scale insects, red spider mites, mealybugs, aphids, and whitefly larvae on shrubs, evergreens, woody plants, fruit trees, shade trees, azaleas, roses and

other ornamentals. Apply the oil according to label directions.

Remember to buy only what you will use for your current need, choosing the least toxic pesticide possible. Store and dispose all unused chemicals according to package instructions. Contact the Essex County Utilities Authority to learn when its household hazardous waste drop-off days are.

What else can I do at home? Try composting!!

What is "Composting?"

Composting is the natural decomposition of organic materials. These materials are recycled into a dark, crumbly substance, which can safely and easily be added to gardens and lawns.

What can be composted?

Almost any yard wastes can be composted, such as grass clippings, leaves, flowers and annual weeds. Also, coffee grounds, sawdust, vegetable and fruit peels and fireplace ashes can be added to your compost pile.



Why should I compost?

The finished compost, added to your garden or lawn, will save you money on fertilizer and water costs as well as reducing garbage collection and county incinerator fees.

Also, composting is an environmentally sound practice, returning to the soil needed nutrients and amendments, which otherwise end up in the incinerator. By using compost, you reduce your dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Composting is easy and takes a few minutes each week during the warm weather. You also save time otherwise spent bagging grass and leaves.

Above all, your flowers, plants and lawn will benefit from the improved soil structure and texture,

increased aeration and moisture, and better root development.

How do I start a compost pile?

Select a level spot about three feet square in the corner of your yard. You may build or buy a square bin, open at the top and bottom. Add leaves, grass and other organic waste and turn over the pile every couple of weeks. In warm weather, add a little water to keep the materials moist. Within three to six months you will have a dark, crumbly material ready to be added to your garden and lawn, and placed around plants and shrubs.

The Livingston Environmental Commission hopes you have enjoyed the information in this brochure. Using even just one new idea, you will be doing your part to protect Livingston's ground waters. Let's keep Livingston CLEAN and GREEN!!!

Where do I go for more information?

NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Pesticide Control Program: 609-530-4070 or www.state.nj.us/dep/enforcement/pcp/

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) www.epa.gov/region02/pesticides/: 732-321-4391

To receive USEPA's free booklet: *The Environmental Consumer's Handbook* call: 800-424-9346

Essex County Utilities Authority: 973-857-2350 Ext. 146

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener Hotline 973-228-2210

The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) Resource Center: 973-539-7547 www.anjec.org

US Composting Council: 440-989-2748 www.compostingcouncil.org

Garden's Alive! (catalog) 812-537-8650

A list of landscapers throughout the state who have received formal training in IPM can be obtained from Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County. 732-349-1246

Township of Livingston
Livingston Environmental Commission
357 South Livingston Avenue
Livingston, NJ 07039

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What you do in your own yard has an impact on the ENVIRONMENT.

Let's make that a positive impact!



You can have a green lawn, beautiful yard and a safe environment!

This brochure is designed to help you, as a Livingston resident, make knowledgeable choices about the products you buy, and the methods you use to beautify your home, so that we can all enjoy a safer, cleaner environment.

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