

## You are the Solution to Water Pollution

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



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.



How you care for your lawn has a direct impact on river water quality because rain water 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.

Practicing responsible lawn care today can protect our water quality for tomorrow.

*For more information please visit:*

Fort Wayne City Utilities  
[www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/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 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 provide more areas that let rain water 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. They're a great strategy for soaking in rainwater from downspouts or sump pumps.

**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, manure, garden plants, and fruit and vegetable scraps (no meat, dairy, or fat)

**3 parts "brown"** = dried leaves and plants, branches, and woody materials

*Mix together and 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



Fort Wayne  
City Utilities



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

# What Can I Do?

## Test Your Soil

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

Test your soil for nutrients and pH to determine if your lawn and garden require added nutrients to be healthy.

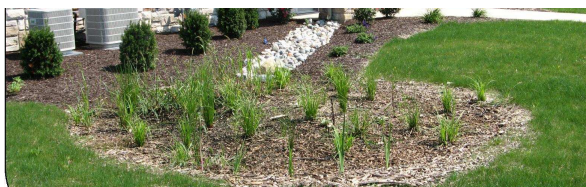
You can purchase a home test for soil pH, nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium at local hardware stores, "big box" home and garden stores or on line starting as low as \$12.

Much more information on soil testing is available from the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service and at their website at: [www3.ag.purdue.edu/counties/marion/Pages/SoilSamplingTesting.aspx](http://www3.ag.purdue.edu/counties/marion/Pages/SoilSamplingTesting.aspx)

## Choose Native Plants

Native plants are well-suited to our 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.*



## Plant A Rain Garden

Rain gardens are landscaped areas ideal for holding and processing stormwater. Using plants, they also draw much of the nutrient-rich water deep into the soil.

## 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.

Applied to land before planting, they provide nutrients essential to plant growth and can reduce the amount of chemical fertilizer needed.

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

### Biosolids and Lime Pick-Up & Yard Waste Recycling

*Fort Wayne City Utilities*

*6200 block of Lake Avenue 260-749-8040*

April-Nov

Monday -Saturday

8am-6pm

Sunday

Noon-6pm

Dec-March

Mon-Fri:

8am-2pm

*Closed Holidays*

*National Serv-All Yard Waste Recycling*

*6231 MacBeth Road*

*260-747-4117*

Monday—Friday

8am-4pm

Saturday

8am- Noon

*Closed Sundays & Holidays*

## Yard-waste Composting Site guidelines

<u>Acceptable:</u>	<u>Unacceptable:</u>
Garden Waste	Construction Debris
Leaves	Cement
Grass	Scrap Lumber
Prunings	Dirt
Weeds	Brush
Vines	Fruit from Trees

## Water Smarter

Water deeply to promote strong root growth, and water in the early morning to avoid evaporation.

**Using less water saves you money. It also means less chemical runoff and soil erosion giving us cleaner rivers.**

## Grasscycle

Would you like to save time and money? The average lawn requires about \$700 and 70 hours of labor per year to maintain! But you can **cut your cost and reduce the time and energy you spend** by grasscycling.

Grasscycling refers to the practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn when mowing.

A 1,000 square foot lawn can produce up to 500 pounds of clippings in a year. That's a lot of clippings to rake, bag and haul. In addition, clippings and other year waste cause Fort Wayne's waste stream going to the landfill to increase by a third in the summer. The weight of the yard waste can increase the monthly bill for trash collection services.

For optimal grasscycling results:

- \* Mow when the grass is dry to touch
- \* Keep the mower blade sharp
- \* Cut off no more than 1/3 the length of the grass
- \* Cut when the grass is 3 to 4 inches tall

Grass clippings left on the lawn break down easily within a couple of weeks and can provide your lawn with up to 20% of the nitrogen it needs.