

RESPONSIBLE FERTILIZER & CHEMICAL USE



THINK BLUE
MASSACHUSETTS

Choose smart fertilizers — Massachusetts law prohibits the use of phosphorus fertilizers unless you're planting new seed or have a recent soil test indicating a deficiency.

Always check the label, and follow legal and environmental guidelines.

- ✓ **Test your soil first** — you might need less fertilizer than you think, and it's the law for phosphorus use.
- ✓ **Choose smart fertilizers** — slow-release or phosphorus-free options are best and often required.



Think before you apply! Smart landscaping keeps pollutants out of our water.

Less Is More: Smarter
Lawn Care

Learn more online:
ThinkBlueMA.org



BMPs for Landscaping Chemicals and Fertilizer

Most of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified below are non-structural and cost little or nothing to implement. This listing is not all-inclusive and other non-structural and structural BMPs can be implemented to further reduce the potential of contributing to stormwater pollution.

DO'S

- Apply fertilizer during the optimal time of year to align with plant nutrient uptake and growth cycles.
- Store fertilizers and pesticides in a covered, secure location to prevent spills.
- Apply products during calm, dry weather to avoid drift and runoff.
- Calibrate application equipment to ensure accurate coverage.
- Use slow-release fertilizers to minimize nutrient leaching.
- Clean up spills immediately using dry methods like absorbents or sweeping.

DON'TS

- Apply products before heavy rain or when the ground is saturated.
- Spray chemicals near storm drains, catch basins, or bodies of water.
- Hose down spills or residue—this pushes pollutants into the stormwater system.
- Over-fertilize to “green up” lawns quickly—it’s mostly ineffective, wasteful and harmful downstream.
- Leave containers open or unlabelled—this risks spills and safety hazards.

***Think Blue Means
Clean Water for You!***

Learn more online:
ThinkBlueMA.org

