

Environmentally Friendly Landscaping Tips

- Use nontoxic chemical alternatives whenever possible and pull weeds by hand.
- Avoid overuse of fertilizers, especially near the water's edge. Rain and lawn watering can wash excess fertilizer into water bodies where excess nutrients cause algal blooms (green pond scum) and undesirable weed growth. The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences recommends using fertilizers with a high percentage of slow-release, the less chance of leaching into Florida's water bodies. Proper fertilizer application can result in less mowing, fewer nutrients washing into ponds and water bodies, and fewer insects and disease problems.
- Use only herbicides labeled for aquatic use when maintaining stormwater ponds. Herbicides not labeled for aquatic use may harm fish and other aquatic life, and their application to aquatic sites is prohibited by state and federal law.
- Wait until grass is actively growing to apply fertilizer. Fertilizer applied when grass is not growing wastes your money and time and can contaminate your water.
- Never dump oils and other chemical from your home directly into stormwater drains, which are direct conduits to your stormwater pond or natural water body. Contact your local government's waste management department for a list of disposal facilities.
- Keep vehicle tuned up and in good operating condition. Check for drips and repair leaks immediately to keep nuisance oils off pavement.
- Buy low- or no- phosphate cleaners and detergents. Phosphates act as a fertilizer and increase algae and aquatic weeds in stormwater ponds. When these plants die, they rob the water of oxygen and fish may die.
- Wash your vehicles, bicycles and home equipment on the lawn, where soapy water can't quickly run toward the nearest storm drain, picking up other pollutants as it goes. Wash your car with nontoxic, low-phosphate soap and use water sparingly.
- Sweep walks and driveways instead of hosing them down.
- Clean up pet waste from which nutrients and bacteria can enter the stormwater drains and contaminate the water system.
- Avoid cutting your lawn too short, which reduces its effectiveness in capturing runoff, leaving it taller will help it to survive dry periods.

What should you do if you see an illicit or illegal discharge that could affect our Stormwater Management System? Please contact the Hillsborough County Stormwater Emergency Operations Center (813) 272-5912, or (813) 272-6900, City of Tampa Stormwater Division – Illicit/Illegal Discharge (813) 274-3101, or the Arbor Greene CDD Community Manager (813) 991-9226 ext. 7.