Green Tips around the home!

- Read the label carefully and always use precautions when applying fertilizers and herbicides.
- Use only the amount recommended on the product label. Any amount left over should never be mixed with other fertilizer, herbicide or pesticide products.
- Avoid applying fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide products outside on windy or rainy days. Never apply products near storm drains or creeks.
- Maintain existing trees on your property, and plant trees and shrubs that prevent erosion and support infiltration of water into the soil.
- Disperse organic deposits such as grass, wood chips, and leaves on soil to act as a compost system to prevent erosion and runoff.
- If you select a professional lawn care service, select a company that uses practices to minimize the use of fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide products.
- Misuse of fertilizer and herbicide products can damage the soil's natural resources essential for healthy grasses and plants. Contact the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) Office or a garden supply center for a soil test kit.

References

Herbicides

https://www.epa.gov/caddis-vol2/caddis-volume-2-sources-stressors-responses-herbicides

Wastes-Resources Conservation Reduce, Reuse, Recycle-Composting

https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home

http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/composting/questions.htm

Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) Soil Testing Laboratory

http://www.aces.edu/anr/soillab/

https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home

Stormwater Hotline
205.930.1999

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Jefferson County Department of Health
Watershed Protection Program

in Cooperation with the

Stormwater Management Authority Inc.

Keep It Green and Simple

Herbicides

Herbicides are chemicals used to remove unsafe and undesirable plant vegetation. Often times herbicides are used on lawns, parks, golf courses and other greenspaces. When applying herbicide products, vegetation management is the key. Excessive application of herbicide products can present a potential threat to the environment's natural resources and water quality. Please read the label carefully and use herbicide applications only when needed.

Fertilizer Versus Compost

Fertilizer contains large quantities of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous that can potentially wash into storm drains and ultimately into a lake or stream. Nutrients from fertilizer may prompt algal blooms, causing aquatic plants to over grow and suffocate other aquatic life. As a result, algal blooms can remove the oxygen in the water that fish and other organisms need to breathe.

Compost can enhance soil structure and provide nutrients from a composition of decaying organic matter. Compost allows natural fertilizer to be applied to lawns and gardens assisting in the condition of the soil and increasing the nutrients. Compost has been discovered to suppress plant disease and pests, reduce or remove the need for chemical fertilizer, and increase agricultural crops' growth.

What are the Benefits to Compost?

Compost can prevent pollutants from entering into storm water runoff and reaching surface water resources. Another advantage of using compost is that it has been shown to prevent erosion and siltation near water banks, creeks, lakes, streams, roadways and golf courses.

Composting yard trimmings save landfill space and lowers methane production in landfills. The composting process can absorb odors and treat organic compounds. It binds heavy metals and prevents them from transferring to water resources being absorbed by plants and contaminated soils. Compost has the ability to help restore poor soils. Composting strengthens the production of micro-organisms that break down organic matter to create humus. Humus is a rich nutrient-filled material that increases the nutrients in soils and helps maintain moisture.

Composting is Easy and It Makes Sense!

As an alternative to organic matter entering into storm drains, streams, creeks or landfills, compost can be converted into a beneficial resource which can even be reused around the household or environment.

Listed below are examples of how compost can be beneficial in your area:

- Farmers can use compost to enhance produce and grassy areas.
- Landscapers can use compost as a soil modification for decorative purposes.
- Landfill operators can use compost to cover waste areas onsite and during revitalization projects.
- Garden operators can use compost for improving plant and forest seedling crops and for preventing certain plant diseases.
- Public operations can use compost for landscaping and for remediating contaminated or weathered sites.
- Homeowners can use compost to enrich gardens and soils around trees and shrubs.