



USING PHOSPHORUS-FREE FERTILIZERS

Why use 'No-Phos'?

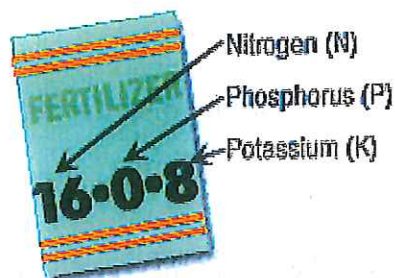
Here are important lawn questions and answers for all lakeside residents.

❖ Why use lawn fertilizer without phosphorus around lakes or streams?

A: Much of the phosphorus (phosphate) you apply actually runs off the lawn before penetrating the soil. That means it gets into the lake causing problems. What's more, increased boating traffic keeps phosphorus stirred; preventing natural elimination. Some states now ban the use of fertilizer containing phosphorus near lakes, streams or ponds.

❖ How do I know there's no phosphorus in my fertilizer?

A: Check the second number on the package formula. **15-0-10**, for example, means zero phosphate. These are always listed in this order.



❖ Does my lawn need phosphorus?

A: **No.** In this region, most soil provides all the phosphorus your established lawn needs. Actually, adding nitrogen promotes a thick, healthy lawn and decreases run-off because it decreases soil erosion. Two benefits in one!

❖ How does phosphorus damage a lake, stream or pond?

A: Phosphorus encourages a heavier algae bloom and stimulates other aquatic plants, especially unwanted varieties like Eurasian Water Milfoil that can choke a lake, and is quite difficult to eradicate. So, if your lake has a noticeably heavier "weed" growth it's likely due to too much phosphorus from run-off.

❖ What's the best way to use a no-phosphorus fertilizer?

A: Follow the instructions on the package, and don't be afraid to use somewhat **LESS** than is recommended. Instructions are meant for a wide variety of conditions, it's usually not necessary to use more than 75% of the application rate.

❖ **When should I feed my lakeside lawn?**

A: Try using a schedule based upon major holidays:

- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Halloween

❖ **What are some other things I should avoid on my lake lawn?**

- Avoid letting fertilizer wash off the turf.
- Don't fertilize when the soil is saturated.
- Avoid getting fertilizer on driveways, sidewalks and storm drains.
- Above all, fertilize carefully. Don't let your fertilizer application get into the lake, stream or pond.
- Use a mulching mower to leave the grass clippings on the turf.
- Cut no more than the top third of the grass.

❖ **If I want to use nitrogen, what's recommended?**

A: Apply about one pound per 1,000 square feet of turf area. In shade, use half that amount.

❖ **Why use nitrogen?**

A: Turf needs added nitrogen because nitrogen is unstable. What the plant does not quickly use is lost.

❖ **Where can I buy it?**

A: Your local nursery or landscape supply should have phosphorus-free fertilizers in stock. If not, ask them to get it. Most large chain stores will not carry a stock of no-phos. Your best bet? Call ahead first.

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ⁱ **NOTE: The above is presented in general terms. For more specific information, consult your local landscape or soil conservation professional.**