

Lawn Chemicals that Go On Up Here...

Before you apply lawn products in Weekapaug, please review these important facts.



...Wind Up In Here.

WHAT YOU DO TO YOUR LAWN AFFECTS QUONOHONTAUG POND

Quonny pond is a wonderful playground for young and old, and it's one of the main reasons Weekapaug is such a special place. But did you know that much of the first pond can not support wildlife such as crabs, fish and shellfish for significant parts of many summer days? Excess nutrients rob the pond of life-giving oxygen.

As residents of the Weekapaug Fire District, we need to change the way we think about lawn care, or our pond will lose the qualities that makes it so special and unique. For more information, please contact:

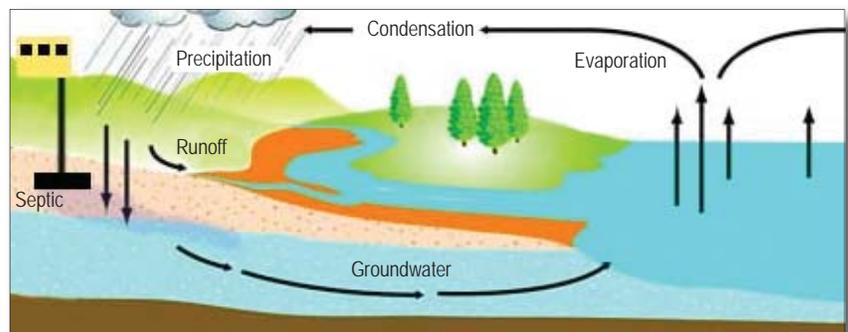
- The Weekapaug Fire District Office
- Bill Lester (william.lester@cox.net)
- Kristin Lester Revill (krevill@comcast.net)

or visit.....

www.saltpondscoalition.org

EXCESS LAWN FERTILIZER POLLUTES OUR POND AND DESTROYS WILDLIFE

- ▶ Lawn fertilizers do not stay on your lawn. They are highly soluble in water and do not "stick" to soil when unused by plants. Nitrogen and phosphorous can travel great distances through soil. Even if you don't live on the pond, your fertilizers are likely reaching either the pond or the ocean.
- ▶ Fertilizers in the pond over-promote algal growth - too much algae looks bad, smells bad, and depletes oxygen in the water.
- ▶ Marine creatures, such as fish, shellfish and crabs, cannot live under anoxic (no/low oxygen) conditions. If we don't reduce our nutrient runoff, Quonny Pond will suffer and Weekapaug will be diminished.



Excess nutrients reach the pond via surface water runoff and groundwater. These water sources pick up nutrients from both surface infiltration and/or ineffective septic systems.

Continued on flip side

You Can Have A Beautiful Lawn And Protect Quonochontaug Pond

The goal is to only apply as much fertilizer as your lawn needs

- ▶ First, test your soil: This will tell you exactly what nutrients and/or lime your soil needs. The WFD has tested several sites around the fire district to show residents the typical soil nutrient profile in their neighborhood.
- ▶ Lime your lawn. Many lawns in our area are acidic and are often mistaken for under-fertilized lawns. A lawn pH test will tell you how much lime you need. Proper soil pH ensures that your lawn can take up the fertilizer it needs. Apply only in Fall.
- ▶ Follow directions: Use exactly the recommended type of fertilizer and always apply the lowest recommended amounts.
- ▶ Time fertilizer applications carefully. In the Fall or early Spring. Avoid applications prior to wet or cold weather.
- ▶ Leave grass cuttings on your lawn with the mulch setting. These provide up to 25% of needed nutrients to your grass.
- ▶ Mow your lawn correctly: Set your mower height to a high setting (at least 2 inches). Never cut more than 1/3 of shoot growth. This encourages healthy, well rooted grass that needs less fertilizer and is better able to resist pests.
- ▶ Use slow release fertilizers with at least a 30% WIN (water insoluble nitrogen) rating.
- ▶ Spot apply weed killers and pesticides.
- ▶ Increase natural landscaping, especially between your lawn and wetlands, pond or ocean.
- ▶ Remember: **A healthy, well maintained lawn in our area needs little or no fertilizer.**
- ▶ Communicate all of this to your lawn care provider, if you have one. Be diligent – make sure they follow your request. Its much easier for them to overfertilize!
- ▶ If you are interested in having your soil tested, please contact the UMass Soil Lab at <http://www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/>.



Other things you can do to help reduce nutrient flow into the pond:



Upgrade your septic system and/or have your tank pumped regularly. We recommend pumping new septic tanks at least once every five years.



Use low phosphate laundry and dish detergent (recommended brands carried by Stop & Shop, McQuade's, and Sandy's include: Seventh Generation, Sun and Earth, and Mrs. Meyers. Coupons for Laundry and Dish detergents will be available at the WFD office.