

## How Can You Help Keep the Environment Clean?

Having a clean environment is important to everyone. It impacts both our health and our economy.

Making sure that only rain goes to storm drains is something that everyone can do to make a difference in the quality of our environment.

Best management practices, or BMPs, are procedures that help to prevent pollutants like oil, gasoline, and antifreeze from entering our storm drains. Each of us can do our part to keep storm water clean by using the BMPs in this brochure.

## What Else Can You Do?

Questions about what you can do to solve this or other stormwater issues in our community?

Call 480-350-4311.

**To report illicit discharges to storm drains, call (480) 350-2811 anytime, or go online to: <http://www.tempe.gov/stormwater>**

Municipal Utilities Department  
Environmental Services Section  
P.O. Box 5002  
Tempe, AZ 85280



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## Environmentally Friendly Yard and Garden Care



# Environmentally Friendly Yard and Garden Care

Maintaining a healthy yard is important to most residents and many say that they maintain their own lawns. However, your yard may not be as “green” as you think. Excess fertilizer and pesticides can wash off your lawns when it rains and pollute Tempe’s lakes and other water bodies. Here are some tips for you to follow when maintaining your lawn that prevent water pollution while keeping a yard green.

## Fertilizer Application

- Avoid fertilizing when heavy rain is predicted.
- Use slow-release forms of nitrogen and apply fertilizer according to manufacturer’s instructions.
- Keep fertilizer on target areas and don’t over spray onto hard surfaces.
- If fertilizer is spilled or lands on paved surfaces, sweep it up and apply it to the lawn, then irrigate the lawn to minimize runoff.



## Pesticide Application

- Read the pesticide label BEFORE you handle or apply it.
- Avoid applying pesticides when rain is predicted.

## Grass and Yard Clippings

- Don’t blow grass clippings and leaves in the street or down a storm drain! These extra nutrients can reduce oxygen levels in water and potentially cause fish kills.
  - Use a mulching mower to reduce the amount of grass clippings. Bag excess clippings for trash or bulk pick-up.
  - Recycle clippings.  
<https://www.tempe.gov/government/municipal-utilities/>  
Call 480.350.4311 for bulk schedule.
- Additional pickups can be scheduled for a fee.
- Compost plant clippings, leaves, and other plant material or bag them for curbside pickup.
  - Convert your lawn to a low water use landscape.



## Prevent Erosion

- When installing landscaping try to schedule work during dry weather.
- Cover bare areas with plants or mulch.
- Leave a vegetative buffer at your property boundary undisturbed.

## Equipment Maintenance and Cleanup

- Don’t wash equipment or use cleaning chemicals where runoff can drain to a storm drain.
- Dispose of old oil, gasoline, and yard chemicals properly.
- Don’t litter. If transporting yard waste, cover the load.



While the actions of an individual household might contribute small amounts of pollution, the combined effect of a neighborhood or community can have a serious cumulative effect.