

Test Your Soil

Test your soil pH to determine what kind of fertilizer will keep your lawn healthy.

Purchase a soil test kit at your local hardware store for **as little as \$12**. Test for:

- pH
- Nitrogen
- Phosphorus
- Potassium

Learn more about soil testing from the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service:

www3.ag.purdue.edu/counties/marion/Pages/SoilSamplingTesting.aspx

Choose Native Plants

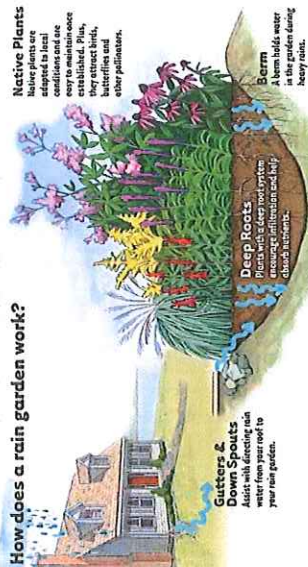
Plants that are well-suited to this area require less water, fertilization, and pesticides. Their low maintenance/high conservation value make them great for landscaping.

Ask your local garden center for native plant choices.

Plant a Rain Garden

Rain gardens are landscaped areas designated to processing stormwater. Using plants, they also draw nutrient rich water from deep within the soil.

How does a rain garden work?



What Can I Do?

Use Biosolids and Compost

Fort Wayne City Utilities produces and distributes *biosolids*—a by-product of the water treatment process that is mixed with composted leaves.

Biosolids can be used as a fertilizer or soil treatment. Apply biosolids before planting to reduce the amount of chemical fertilizer needed later.

Biosolids and Lime Pick Up & Yard Waste Recycling

Fort Wayne City Utilities

6200 Lake Avenue (260)427-5535

April-November

Monday-Saturday 8-6pm

Sunday noon-6pm

December-March

Monday-Friday 8-2pm

National Serv-All Yard Waste Recycling

6231 Macbeth Road (260)747-4117

Monday-Friday 8-4pm

Saturday 8-noon

Closed all Sundays and Holidays

Yard Waste Composting Site Guidelines

Acceptable: Unacceptable:

Garden Waste Leaves Concrete

Construction Debris

Grass Scrap Lumber

Prunings Dirt

Weeds Brush

Vines Fruit/Veggies

Water Smarter

Water lawn and landscape early in the morning to encourage root growth and avoid evaporation.

Using less water saves money. Also, it reduces chemical runoff and erosion, to give us all cleaner rivers.

GrassCycle

Want to save time and money? The average lawn requires almost **\$700** and **70 hours** a year to maintain.

Reduce this time and energy by grasscycling.

Grasscycling—the practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn after mowing.

A 1,000 square foot lawn creates about 500 pounds of clippings a year.

Collecting clippings can raise waste disposal costs by a third during the summer. Garbage collection costs are based on the weight of trash disposed.

For optimal grasscycling results:

- Mow when grass is dry to the touch
 - Keep mower blade sharp
- Cut off less than 1/3 of grass length
- Mow when grass is 3-4 inches tall

Grass clippings left on the lawn break down easily in a couple of weeks and can provide your lawn 20% of the nitrogen it needs.

What is a watershed?

Rain that falls on your property will run when it hits the ground until it reaches a river or stream then it will effect every property downstream.

What does this mean for me?

The puddle that your child plays in today could be someone's drinking water tomorrow. Lawn chemicals and fertilizer can seriously impact the quality rivers and streams; it can kill fish and pollute water.

Practicing responsible lawn care today can protect our water



For More Information Visit:

Fort Wayne City Utilities
www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities

OR

Allen County Partnership for
Water Quality
www.ACwater.org

Let Rainwater Flow

Hard surfaces like roofs and concrete driveways and patios block rain from filtering through soil to fertilize ground-cover and replenish groundwater.

Some ideas to allow stormwater to soak into the ground are:

- Use wood and mulch in your landscape for water to filter through before reaching the ground
- Collect rainwater in barrels to put on a garden later
- Begin a rain garden: plant an area of plants that strictly absorb water to collect outstanding runoff.

Composting is the breakdown of organic matter to create a rich, natural fertilizer. Compost decreases a likelihood of weeds and erosion, it enhances soil texture, and allows air and water to be absorbed.

How to Compost:

1 part "Green" - grass clippings, manure, garden scraps, fruit and veggie scraps
3 parts "Brown" - dried leaves, branches, and woody material

Mix together and moisten, turning occasionally.

Place compost around trees and other landscaping to deter weeds, improve soil structure, and retain moisture.

You are the Solution to Water Pollution

Lawn Care Practices to Protect Water

