

Landscaping and Lawn Care for Landscaping Companies



Many Corsica River Watershed residents hire landscaping companies to perform yard work on their property. Landscaping activities can be effectively integrated with practices that reduce the risk of polluting our waterbodies.

Landscape and garden maintenance activities can be major contributors to water pollution. Soils, yard wastes, uncovered materials, over watering and garden chemicals become the part of the "urban stormwater runoff" combination that splashes onto roofs into gutters, across streets, and into storm drains before entering lakes and streams.

Excess fertilizers applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams, the Corsica River, and the Chesapeake Bay. Over applying fertilizer to lawns contributes to nutrient loading that pollutes our waterways. Your customers' yards can be a high-risk area for polluting stormwater.

Landscape Design

- Use native vegetation (suited to soil type, slope, available light and climate).
- Select grass that needs fewer nutrients and less water.
- Group plants with similar water needs together.
- Practice xeriscaping, which combines water conservation and conventional landscaping techniques.

Landscape Cleanup Practices

- Don't blow yard waste down the storm drain or near streams.
- Don't hose down an area after applying fertilizer.
- Sweep up any spilled fertilizer. (Don't let it get on sidewalks, streets or in storm drains.)
- Compost all yard clippings.

Maintaining Soil and Fertility

- Test soil compaction and aerate when needed. Aeration and the use of slow, time-released or organic fertilizers will improve infiltration into the soil.
- Add organic matter such as compost to the soil to improve infiltration.
- Set mower blade height to 3-inch to shade weeds and develop healthy root system.

As the manager of a landscape company...

- It is important to train your employees on careful handling and storage practices for chemicals.
- Minimize the use of chemicals. (It's also a great way to cut costs.)

Innovative Techniques

- To prevent harmful air emissions, use electric powered equipment rather gasoline powered.
- Check lawn and plant beds regularly for pest problems.
- Direct gutter downspouts to landscaped areas instead of onto pavement. Be sure that the soil where you point the downspout can absorb large amounts of water.

Chemicals and Equipment

- Store similar chemicals together.
- Mix chemicals where any spills can be cleaned up before they reach a waterway or street.
- Keep a spill kit on all vehicles.
- Have a designated area for equipment away from streams.
- When cleaning equipment at a work site, avoid letting contaminated water run into streams or streets.

Be A Solution to Water Pollution

If you practice pollution prevention techniques, you'll not only be preserving the environment but saving overhead expenses. Always remember, what we do on land affects the Corsica River and the Chesapeake Bay – www.corsicariver.org