

Living Streamside

Guide to Designing your Property and Protecting our Watershed



BACKYARD BUFFER PROGRAM

Green Lawn Basics

Tip Sheet #2

Description:

- General lawn care and gardening practices that promote less maintenance and a cleaner environment.

Recommendations:

References for recommendations are provided on following page.

- Use fertilizers sparingly or switch to organic alternatives entirely.
- Test your soil to see if you need supplements before you apply them.
- Ask a local native plant nursery or your Penn State Cooperative Extension for advice.
- Never apply fertilizer or chemicals before a rain storm. It will wash away.
- Compost (use your own leaf litter, lawn clippings and kitchen scraps to make a high quality soil amendment).
- Learn about good vs. bad insects (many insects are important to the life cycle of our native plants).
- Remove invasive plants and replace with native species.
- Water wisely. When the right plant is selected for the right conditions you may not need to water at all or only 1-2 times per month.
- Water in the morning for less evaporation.
- Use a soaker hose to water directly into the soil.
- Use a rain barrel to water your plants.

Functions/Benefits:

- Water conservation
- Improves water quality reaching the stream
- Saves money
- Reuse of household and yard organic material (compost is free fertilizer)



Photo Credit: Washington State Puget Sound Action Team



For more information, contact:
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References:

- *A Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management*, Philadelphia Water Department (www.delawareestuary.org/pdf/HomeownersGuideSWMgmt.pdf)
- *Guide to Gardening for Life in Southeastern Pennsylvania* (http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/guidetogardeningforlife_pa.html)
- *Bringing Nature Home, How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* (Douglas W. Tallamy)
- Gardens Alive Environmentally Responsible Products (www.gardensalive.com)
- List of native plant nurseries by Pennsylvania Native Plant Society (www.pawildflower.org)
- Saving Water Partnership (www.savingwater.com)
- Penn State Cooperative Extension by county (<http://extension.psu.edu/>)
- Soils testing: Pennsylvania State Agricultural Analytical Services Laboratory (www.aasl.psu.edu)
- Control of Invasive Non-native Plants (<http://www.mdflora.org/publications/invasives.htm>)
- Organic Landscape Alliance (www.organiclandscape.org) click on Fact Sheets
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Educational offerings: Tree Tenders, Garden Tenders and Youth Programs (www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org)

Note: PWD does not endorse any sources identified nor can they verify any information/claims these sources provide. Design and installation of a project is site specific and the responsibility of the property owner.



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