

# PHOSPHORUS

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## Go Phosphorus Free

By Danielle Ritter

### What is phosphorus?

A naturally-occurring nutrient that plants only use in small quantities for growth & energy storage.

### Why is it a problem?

Excess phosphorus travels into rivers, streams, and lakes resulting in algal blooms and undesirable plant growth. Algae overgrowth turns water green and makes it unsustainable for many species due to the lack of food, oxygen, and viable habitats.

### How does this apply to you?

Quality of drinking water is affected, indicated by poor taste and smell. Some algae can produce toxins causing skin irritations. If consumed, this water can lead to gastrointestinal problems and damage to internal systems or even major organs. Harmful for pets, including livestock to consume contaminated water.

### How can you help?

- Don't guess...Soil Test!
- Mow Grass High  
Taller grass is stronger grass. Tall grass promotes root growth and shades out weeds. Let short clips fall back into the lawn. Clippings recycle nitrogen back into the soil, so fertilizer can be reduced by 25% or more.
- Sweep Up Fertilizer From Paved Surfaces  
Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways can easily wash into storm drains, rivers, and lakes.
- The Right Time To Fertilize  
If you have fertilized in the Fall, you will have a green lawn in the early Spring - and won't need to fertilize

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