Backyard Actions *for a Cleaner* Chesapeake Bay

Your Lawn Leads *to the* Bay

When it rains, excess nutrients—mainly nitrogen and phosphorus—can wash off the land and into the streams and rivers that feed the Chesapeake Bay. Once in our waterways, excess nutrients fuel the growth of algae blooms that block sunlight from reaching Bay grasses, rob the water of oxygen and threaten underwater life.

What You Can Do

Fertilizer is one nutrient source that can be controlled with your help. Here's how:

- Test your soil to determine the amount and type of fertilizer needed by plants.
- Always apply fertilizer based on soil test results. Applying too much fertilizer may burn your lawn, garden or landscape plants.
- Contact the University of Maryland Extension Home and Garden Information Center for soil testing information and a video on how to take a soil sample at **www.hgic.umd.edu**.

When to Soil Test

- ***New lawns:*** test after grading, but before seeding
- ***Vegetable gardens:*** test every three years
- ***Established lawns, landscape plants and perennial gardens:*** test every three years

Learn More

Visit **www.mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer** to learn more backyard actions for to a cleaner Chesapeake Bay and get the facts about Maryland's new lawn fertilizer law.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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