

(Continued from reverse)

SUMMARY OF NEW ORDINANCE:

- ⊗ Use of fertilizer containing phosphorus is still allowed for agricultural practices, in vegetable or flower gardens, around trees and shrubs, and in indoor potted plants.
- ⊗ Any person, firm or corporation who sells fertilizer at retail must post signage in the following fashion:
 - Displayed at the point of sale or display area for fertilizer (each aisle)
 - Signs must be clearly readable
 - Sign should read “Section 94.501 of Highland Park City Code restricts the application of fertilizer containing inorganic phosphorus to lawn or turf areas in the city”
- ⊗ Any person who violates any provision of this ordinance is subject to a fine of not less than \$200 and not more than \$500.
 - Each day which a person is in violation of any part of the ordinance constitutes a separate and distinct offense.
- ⊗ This ordinance is effective as of June 1, 2010

For more information about fertilizers or the new ordinance:

- ⊗ See: <http://www.cityhpil.com>
Call Public Works at (847) 432-0807
- ↔ **Summary Begins on Reverse** ↔

What can I do to help?

Your help is vital in the implementation of this new ordinance. In order to protect our natural water resources, we ask that all property owners:

- ⊗ **Speak to your landscaper** about the types of fertilizer they use. While many companies have already discontinued the use of fertilizers containing synthetic phosphorus, others may not be aware of the impact they have.
- ⊗ **Check your lawn fertilizer bag** for the presence of inorganic, or synthetic, phosphorus. This is a simple and effective way to be sure that you are in compliance with the new ordinance.
- ⊗ **Test your soil** for the presence of essential nutrients. If an adequate amount is already present, adding more will only increase the chances of fertilizer burn and/or runoff into lakes and streams. Inexpensive test kits are available at many garden stores and online, or your landscaping company may have a service available.
- ⊗ **Inform your friends and family** about the new ordinance and the negative effects of over-fertilization, nutrient pollution and human-induced eutrophication.



Ordinance Section 94.501

Fertilizers Containing Phosphorus
General Regulations



- ⊗ What you need to know about the **new ordinance effective June 1, 2010**
- ⊗ Information on the environmental effects of using lawn fertilizers containing Phosphorus

The City of Highland Park is Committed to Protecting the Quality of Water in our City.



Photo by Jess Van Dyke

Eutrophication - an algal bloom resulting from too much nutrient from sources such as phosphorus and nitrogen in fertilizers.

The City of Highland Park is committed to both high quality drinking water and the preservation of our natural ecosystems. To protect these resources we must protect the quality of the aquatic micro-environments within our city that feed into our Lake Michigan water supply.

Lush green lawns require regular care and upkeep, and many homeowners and landscapers apply fertilizers to help in this process. While a supply of nutrients is necessary for any plant to flourish, excess amounts leach into groundwater supplies, moving into ravines and eventually accumulating in streams, small ponds or lakes.

As the amount of phosphorus and other nutrients increases, algal blooms may occur, blocking sunlight and eventually killing many aquatic species. While this may occur naturally over centuries, human-induced “eutrophication” can take place in just decades.

Effectuated aquatic systems become inhabitable by most native species, disrupting the natural processes which ordinarily act as a filter for storm water before entering our main water supply.

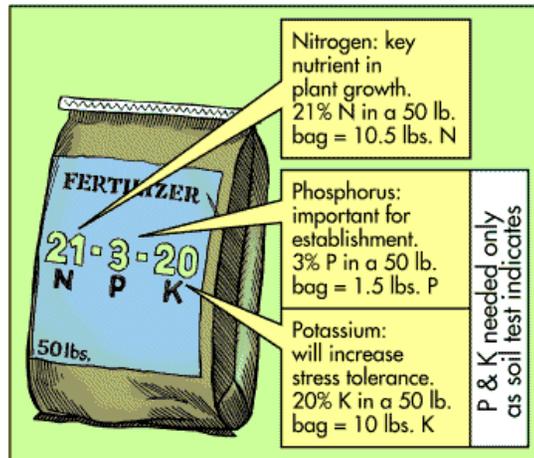
As scientists have become more aware of the negative effects of the over-application of nutrients, policies have been put in place to minimize “nutrient pollution,” and prevent human-induced eutrophication.

What is phosphorus?

Phosphorus is an essential plant nutrient, added to fertilizers in both natural and synthetic forms for domestic and agricultural uses. While the nutrient is necessary for all forms of life, its accumulation can have detrimental effects on the environment. In lakes and streams, this leads to an explosion of algal growth, causing eutrophication, as discussed above. The effects of this can lead to dramatic decreases in biological diversity, severe reductions in water quality, and increased numbers of invasive species as competition from natives diminishes. When the algae die or are eaten toxins are released which can kill animals and may pose a threat to humans.

How can I tell if my fertilizer contains phosphorus?

When looking at a bag of fertilizer, you will find three numbers separated by dashes on the front label. The number on the left indicates the percentage of Nitrogen by weight, the center number represents the amount of Phosphorus, and the third number tells us how much Potassium is available in the fertilizer. Other nutrients may be present in smaller amounts, and will be shown on the back label of the bag. While each of these nutrients is essential for healthy plant growth, both phosphorus and potassium are usually naturally present in adequate amounts.



SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE

SECTION 94.501

- ⊗ Application of fertilizer containing synthetic (inorganic) phosphorus to any lawn or turf area within the city is prohibited except in the following circumstance:
 - With the prior written approval of the City Forester after a soil test is conducted (at the property owner’s expense) showing content below median levels for typical soils in the area.
 - Phosphorus may then only be applied in amounts that would raise the content to those median levels.
 - The fertilizer applied must be integrated into the soil so that it is immobilized and protected from loss by runoff.

- ⊗ Use is prohibited on lawn or turf areas, except for the establishment of newly planted areas during their first growing season.

- ⊗ Naturally occurring, unadulterated, or organic phosphorus in fertilizing products may be applied at any location in the city. These may include:
 - Yard waste compost
 - Commercial organic or phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer
 - Biosolids or other similar materials organic in nature

☞ **Summary Continues on Reverse** ☜