



MINNESOTA WATER
LET'S KEEP IT CLEAN

Spring Tips for Lawns and Lakes

It's a common urge in Minnesota – as soon as the weather warms up we all want to get out into the yard and start working on something. After all, the season is short and we all want to make the most of it! As you head out with shovel and rake in hand, remember that how we care for our yard affects the health of our lakes, rivers and wetlands. Follow these lawn care tips for cleaner water:

- **Keep soil in place!** Bare soil from your lawn can easily wash away with rain and fill in wetlands, rivers and lake bottoms. In addition to destroying wildlife habitat, dirt carries phosphorus, the plant nutrient that turns lakes green with algae. Cover bare areas of soil with mulch or vegetation.
- **Rake up and sweep up!** Grass clippings, tree seeds and leaves are also sources of phosphorus. Mow so that grass clippings are directed back onto the lawn and not into the street. When done mowing, sweep sidewalks, driveways and streets clean of grass clippings.
- **Soak up the rain!** Natural landscapes soak up rain like a sponge. When possible, direct your downspouts onto vegetated areas where water can soak in. If you are adventurous, you can create a raingarden, a shallow depression designed to capture and soak up rainwater.
- **Follow the law!** Minnesota's new phosphorus lawn fertilizer law requires the use of phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer unless when seeding a new lawn or a soil test shows need for phosphorus fertilizer. More info here: www.mda.state.mn.us/phoslaw.



You can learn more about these tips by visiting the *Minnesota Water – Let's Keep it Clean* website at www.cleanwatermn.org. Or contact Dan Miller at the Scott Soil & Water Conservation District at 952-492-5424 or dmiller@co.scott.mn.us.

Water is important to life in Minnesota – the land of 10,000 lakes. Let's do our part to protect the water that makes spring – and all the other seasons – so special.

A message from: ***Scott Clean Water Education Program***