

SOP 8: FERTILIZER & TURF HEALTH

Purpose

It is important to protect stormwater by properly storing, applying, and disposing of fertilizers and by maintaining turf health to reduce diseases.

Always

1. Apply fertilizers based on a soil testing program, soil type, turf function, and assessment by qualified personnel (conservation commission or municipal arborist, etc.).
2. Apply fertilizers to maximize effectiveness and minimize polluted runoff.
3. Store, use, and dispose of all fertilizers and contaminated wastes according to manufacturer's specifications and applicable regulations.
4. Choose seed based on soil types, intended use of area, latest variety research, and/or assessment of past site performance.
5. Check 5-day weather forecast to avoid fertilizing before heavy rain or during a drought.

Whenever Possible:

1. Avoid fertilizing during a drought or when the soil is dry.
2. Apply fertilizers during periods of maximum plant uptake (usually fall and spring).
3. Avoid combined products such as weed and feed, which do not necessarily target specific problems at the appropriate time.
4. Calibrate application equipment to ensure proper application.
5. If phosphorus fertilizer is used when reseeding, mix phosphorus into the root zone.
6. Use natural compost and organic fertilizers instead of synthetic fertilizers.
7. Aerate grassed areas to improve drainage and bring more oxygen to the soil.

Never

1. Never fertilize before a forecasted heavy rainfall.
2. Never apply phosphorus fertilizer on bare soil.
3. Never deposit fertilizer in the water, into storm drains, or onto impervious surfaces (streets and sidewalks).
4. Never apply fertilizer to frozen ground.
5. Never clean up spilled fertilizer by rinsing it with water.

Related SOP'S

1. SOP 7: Chemical Application of Fertilizers, Herbicides, and Pesticides
2. SOP 9: Weed & Pest Control
3. SOP 16: Alternative Products Use, Storage & Disposal
4. SOP 24: General Facility Housekeeping