



# KEEP THE BAY BLUE NOT GREEN

Summer rains wash nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers into our creeks and bays fueling harmful algal blooms and killing aquatic life. That's why Sarasota County prohibits the use of fertilizer containing nitrogen and phosphorus during the summer rainy season, and why at least 50 percent slow-release fertilizer is required during the rest of the year.

**SKIP THE FERTILIZER THIS SUMMER  
JUNE 1 - SEPTEMBER 30**



# BE FLORIDIAN

Fertilize Less, Enjoy Florida More!

**SUMMER** June 1 – September 30

- **Say no to nitrogen.** Sarasota County prohibits the use of any fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus from June 1 through September 30.
- **Pump up with iron.** Landscape products with iron can keep lawns green through summer.
- **Dig better dirt.** Add compost to improve your soil and give your garden a boost.
- **Use Florida-friendly plants.** Plants adapted to Florida need less fertilizer, water, pesticides, and overall care.
- **Keep the clippings.** Leave grass clippings on your lawn.
- **Mow high for health.** Mowing short stresses grass and makes it vulnerable to disease, pests, and drought.

**WINTER** October 1 – May 31

- **Watch the weather.** Rainstorms don't help fertilizers soak in, they wash fertilizers away.
- **Go slow by half.** Sarasota County requires at least 50 percent slow-release nitrogen in lawn or landscape fertilizers.
- **Buffer bodies.** Keep fertilizer at least 10 feet away from waterbodies, including backyard ponds and ditches.
- **Sweep it up.** Sweep fertilizer granules off sidewalks, streets, or driveways back into the landscaping.
- **Skip the phosphorus.** Sarasota County soils are naturally rich in phosphorus.
- **On your guard.** Use a spreader with a deflector shield or edge guard to spread fertilizer only where you want it.
- **Test your turf.** If the problem is a pH imbalance, pest invasion, or disease, then fertilizer is not going to help.

[befloridian.org](http://befloridian.org)

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