

Steps to follow IPM:

1. Always read and follow directions on pesticide and herbicide labels.
2. Learn about plants, especially native plants, and what pests/issues you may run into before planting.
3. Know your location and select the right plants for the right area. Every plant has a different set of parameters in which it thrives best in.
4. Keep a close eye on your plants throughout the year. Are certain pests only spotted at certain times, is your problem increasing or decreasing, can you identify any pests?
5. Use local resources for guidance like your local Cooperative Extension Service. Check out the CT Agricultural Experiment Station website for help: <http://www.ct.gov/caes/site/default.asp>
6. When treatment is necessary use the least toxic and hazardous option available. Look into possible biological controls as well.

Composting

A compost pile is an excellent way to recycle leaves and other yard waste.

Leaves, grass clippings, and organic waste from your house can be converted to rich topsoil through proper composting.

To establish a compost pile:

1. Select an area on your property that is easily accessible. You may want to locate it somewhere where any odors or the sight of it won't upset your neighbors.
2. Shred large materials prior to placing them in the pile to accelerate the decomposition process.
3. Continue to add organic materials to your pile and remember to rotate/mix the pile regularly. Many things can be safely composted in addition to leaves and grass. Some examples:
 - Vegetable and fruit waste
 - Clam, oyster, egg, and nut shells

- Manure
- Coffee grounds
- Sawdust
- Straw and hay

Compost is ready for use when it has a crumbly consistency and is dark brown in color. All plant parts should be unrecognizable.



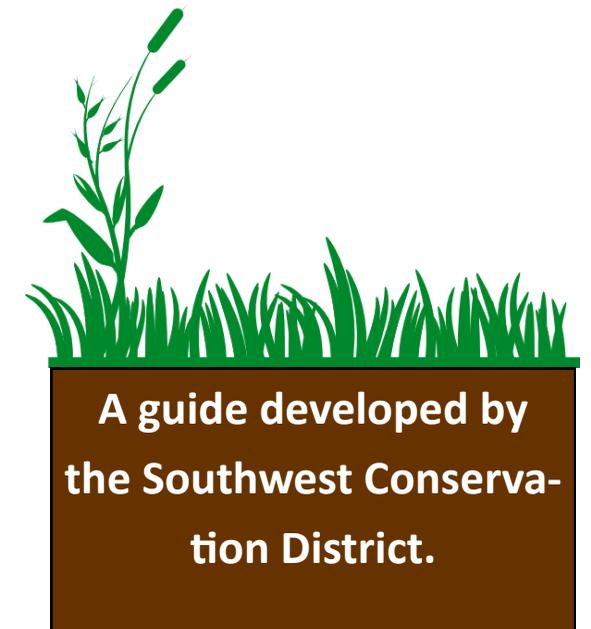
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Careless lawn care practices of the past have proven to contribute to the decreasing quality of our lakes, rivers,

streams, and the Long Island Sound. The adverse effects on the quality and abundance of life within our watersheds has been damaged because of this.

Individual homeowners can play a critical role in protecting our natural resources by making minor changes to their everyday lawn and garden management practices.

Watering

- Water deeply, less frequently: Watering deeply (about 1 inch per week) encourages a healthier lawn with deeper roots. Frequent and light watering produces shallow rooted grass that is less hardy.
- Water in the morning: Less water will be lost to evaporation in the morning sun. A damp lawn in the evening is more prone to disease.

- During droughts do NOT water: It is better to let the lawn remain dormant in times of drought. A dormant lawn will turn green again once the dry spell passes.
- Vary your lawn type: By planting a variety of grasses and using drought tolerant grass seed, your lawn will be hardier and require less water.

Mowing

- Keep grass between 2"-3" tall: Grass this length will shade the soil, cool the roots, prevent weeds, and have deeper roots, making for a healthier lawn.
- Never cut more than 1/3 of the grass blade: Cutting more than this weakens the grass and leaves it vulnerable to disease.
- Leave grass clippings: Leaving the clippings on your lawn saves you time and money. At the same time the clippings reduce waste and act as a natural fertilizer.
- Maintain your lawn mower blade: A dull blade will tear rather than cut the grass, weakening and making it more prone to disease.

Fertilizing

Excess fertilizer from lawns, golf courses, farm fields, and other sources has the potential to wash off the land during rain storms or when watering. That excess fertilizer then travels into storm drains and local rivers and eventually into the Long Island Sound. Once in the water the excess nutrients from the fertilizers cause a series of negative reactions like algal blooms that disrupt water quality and ecological balance.

- Test your soil. Find out what nutrients your soil is lacking if any to determine what type and amounts of fertilizer is needed.
- Use organic fertilizer if possible. Fertilizing 2-3 times a year should be sufficient for most lawns. Over fertilizing can cause additional problems.
- Never water before applying. Water will cause the fertilizer to stick and burn the grass blades.
- Be careful when applying. Avoid getting fertilizer on sidewalks or streets where it can be easily washed into storm drains.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Pesticides and herbicides are poisons used to kill or control pests such as weeds, insects, or fungi. When we use them in our yards to control 'pests' and disease we are also potentially endangering the well being of animals, plants, and insects that may have no or a positive effect on our plants.

There are a variety of alternatives to using harmful, poisonous chemicals. An ecological approach to pest management is called integrated pest management or IPM. Some of the reasons to use IPM over traditional methods of pest control are as follows:

- Potential for allergic or toxic reactions in people when using pesticides/herbicides
- Potential for chemicals to seep into the groundwater or be washed into storm drains or local streams/rivers.
- Potential to harm other flora & fauna aside from the target pest.