



## Phosphorous-Free Fertilizer has Less Impact on the Environment

Now that spring is here, it's time to focus on lawn care, but before you fertilize your lawn after its long winter sleep, it's important to be aware of the environmentally-friendly choices available. Research has shown that lawn fertilizers are impacting the environment, and many states and communities are going as far as to enact laws to restrict the types of fertilizer that may be used. The City of Lebanon does not currently have a fertilizer-usage ordinance, but you can help our environment by choosing a more environmentally-friendly fertilizer and adhering to proper application rates and practices. Excessive or poorly applied fertilizer goes into the storm sewers and eventually the ground water, as well as, local rivers and lakes.

This excess phosphorous in waterways stimulates the growth of algae, which can result in large, smelly algae blooms during the summer months. One pound of phosphorus can stimulate the growth of about 500 pounds of algae! Algae also starves off dissolved oxygen in the water, which is vital to fish and other aquatic life, in addition to, making the water unfit for recreation and drinking.

Fortunately, most lawns already have sufficient phosphorus to meet their needs. Soil testing programs in many states have found that up to 99% of samples provided by homeowners already have enough naturally occurring phosphorus. Routinely using lawn fertilizer with phosphorus means much of the phosphorus will just run off into the storm drains, streams and lakes and stimulate algae blooms. Here are some tips to reduce the phosphorus levels in our waterways?

- Have your lawn soil tested to see if it needs phosphorus. The Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District performs soil tests, and many lawn care and nursery stores also provide soil testing services.
- Use phosphorus-free fertilizer. Every bag of fertilizer has three numbers that provide the percentage weight of nitrogen (N), phosphate (P) and potash (K). The middle number indicates the phosphate content and it should read "0." Please check the labels!



## Use Your Rain

Did you know that there are several ways to maximize on the benefits of the rainfall that falls on your property? Here are some tips to help you effectively use rainwater in your yard:

- Direct roof downspouts away from driveways and foundations and towards your lawn or planting beds where water can soak into the soil.
- Make sure that you don't discharge your roof drains any closer than 10 feet from your property line.
- Use native plants in your landscape. They are adaptable to local conditions and require less water and fertilizer than non-native plants. Local nurseries and landscaping companies can help you select native plants to use in your landscaping.
- Capture rainfall in rain barrels for later use. Rain Barrels also help with reducing and delaying stormwater runoff.
  - *To handle larger volumes of water, rain barrels can be linked together or used with additional water management practices, such as rain gardens.*
  - *An adequate rain barrel must be constructed of UV and weather resistant material. Sunlight and temperature extremes will take a toll on the rain barrel. Ensure that the material is intended for exposure to the elements.*
- *Determine where the barrel's water overflow pipe will be positioned. Always route the overflow away from your home's foundation.*
- *Ensure that the rain barrel has a screen. Screening the top will prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs in the water. The screen will also help to prevent leaves and debris from entering the rain barrel.*
- *Mosquito dunks can also be used to control mosquito larvae, but will not affect the ability to use the water for irrigation purposes.*
- *Remember to protect your rain barrel from freezing. Simply drain the rain barrel and keep the drain open throughout the winter to keep water from collecting in the rain barrel.*
- *Rain barrels require a sturdy, level foundation. A filled 50-gallon rain barrel can weigh in excess of 450 pounds.*

# City's Beautification Program Begins This Month

## A Great Way to Recognize Outstanding Efforts in Your Neighborhood!

The Lebanon Beautification Program recognizes residential, business and rental property owners who have enhanced the beauty of Lebanon by either planting flowers, shrubs, trees and other landscape improvements on their property. Properties will be evaluated during May - October by members of the City's Shade Tree Commission, the Garden Clubs of Lebanon and a Master Gardener. Judges will use the following criteria:

1. **General Appearance and Compatibility**
2. **Design**
3. **Maintenance**

For more information regarding program details and nomination forms call the Service Department at 933-7200, or download an application from the City's website at [www.lebanonohio.gov](http://www.lebanonohio.gov) and click on *Departments*, and follow to *Parks & Recreation*, and *Programs & Events*.

## Is Your Contact Information Up-To-Date?

We strive to provide you with the best service possible. To ensure that you are receiving current information and can be contacted when necessary, please ensure that the Service Department has your current phone number on file. You can call the Service Department at 933-7200 if you need to provide updated information.

## Downtown Walking Tours Offered

A free downtown Lebanon walking tour will be offered on May 12 and June 9, 2012. John Zimkus, historian of the Warren County Historical Society and author of Historical Footnotes of Lebanon, Ohio, will be guiding the tour. This 1 1/2 -hour tour will focus on historical buildings of Lebanon and the interesting businesses that have occupied them over the years.

The tour will begin at 10 a.m. at the Gazebo Park, next to the Golden Lamb. Pre-registration is appreciated for this free tour. For more information and to register, please call Connie Baugher at 228-3156.

## Local Tax Filing Deadline is April 17

The local tax deadline is quickly approaching. Lebanon residents and businesses must file by April 17, 2012 to avoid any penalties. Filing is also required even if no tax is due by the filer.

For more information, contact the tax dept. at 228-3123.



## Summer Tennis Lessons

Instructors from The Club at Harper's Point will provide tennis lessons for the City at Harmon Park. Participants will be grouped based on age and skill level. Minimum enrollment is 6, and the maximum class size is 20. Participants are only required to bring a tennis racquet.

**Registration:** Open  
**Fees:** \$30.00/session  
**Location:** Harmon Park  
**Days:** Tues. & Thurs.

### Session 1

Ages	Dates	Time
6-9	6/12-6/28	10-11 am
10-14	6/12-6/28	9-10 am

### Session 2

Ages	Dates	Time
6-9	7/10-7/26	10-11 am
10-14	7/10-7/26	9-10 am

For more information or to download a registration form, please visit [www.lebanonohio.gov](http://www.lebanonohio.gov) or call Connie Baugher @ 228-3156.