



2024 Fertilize Smart Fact Sheet

Lee County is reminding residents and professional landscapers to stop fertilizing from June 1 through Sept. 30.

Lee County Ordinance No. 0808 – approved unanimously in 2008 by the Lee Board of County Commissioners – bans the use of fertilizers that contain nitrogen and/or phosphorus throughout unincorporated areas of Lee County.

Why the ban is in place:

- To minimize the negative environmental effects of fertilizer runoff entering waterways. These unwanted nutrients in the water can lead to:
 - Harmful algal blooms like red tide and red drift algae that can wash ashore or harm local wildlife, and blue-green algae in freshwater areas
 - Nitrogen or phosphorus pollution in waterways
 - Overgrowth of vegetation in stormwater and drainage conveyances that hinder the goal of flood prevention
- To provide specific guidelines for landscaping and fertilization application, including:
 - Fertilizer granules spilled on impervious surfaces like concrete, brick or stone must be swept up and removed immediately
 - No fertilizer shall be applied within 10 feet from the top of bank of any body of water
 - Spreader deflector shields required when using broadcast or rotary fertilizer spreaders
 - All professional landscaping businesses and institutional landscapers must register with the Lee County Department of Natural Resources and complete a Green Industries Best Management Practices training program

Below are additional ways homeowners can help protect local water quality:

- Keep a low-maintenance zone 6 feet from any body of water
- Pick up pet waste
- Use mulch to help retain soil moisture, protect plants and inhibit weed growth
- Direct stormwater runoff to irrigate landscape and away from hard surfaces
- Recycle yard waste to create an organic fertilizer instead of store-bought fertilizers

Detailed information about Ordinance No. 0808 can be found on the [Fertilize Smart Website](#).