

## MORE INFO

- [Environmental Protection Agency](#)
- [City of Abilene Environmental Recycling Center](#)
- [City of Abilene - Waste Disposal Information](#)
- [Texas 8-1-1 Call Before You Dig](#)
- [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)
- [National Municipal Stormwater Alliance](#)
- [National Assoc. of Clean Water Agencies](#)
- [Texas Dept. of Agriculture](#)
- [Integrated Pest Management](#)



## CONTACT US



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## FERTILIZERS & PESTICIDES

Save Our Waterways  
Clean Water, Healthy Life

Stormwater Services Division

# PROTECTING WATER QUALITY

Millions of pounds of pesticides and fertilizers are used in the United States every year to maintain landscapes. Homeowners, landscapers, garden nurseries, golf courses and the agriculture industry use chemicals to maintain yards, plants, courses, and crops. Pesticides and fertilizers are often misused, polluting Abilene's valuable water resources.

## COMPLICATIONS

**Misuse of fertilizers:** over applying fertilizers damages plants and the excess is easily washed into gutters, streets and ends up in our creeks and lakes.

**Improper use of pesticides:** these are a major source of toxic pollutants. While these are designed to destroy pests, they also poison birds, pets and other wildlife. Pesticides also seep into groundwater and contaminate our drinking water, destroy soil and kill the good germs and organisms in the dirt.

**Careless storage of chemicals:** Chemicals stored in areas exposed to weather will deteriorate, leak or spill. Those leaks or spills can leech into the groundwater supply or run into nearby creeks and lakes.

**Illegal disposal of chemicals:** dumped down sinks carries chemicals to the municipal systems, damages plumbing and treatment equipment and is very expensive to repair or replace. Disposed in a dumpster causes toxic hazards and expensive clean-up at local landfills.

## DID YOU KNOW...

- 5 tiny granules of diazinon can kill a sparrow.
- Texans apply 5 million pounds of fertilizers a year.
- Texans apply 4 million pounds of pesticides a year.
- 1/3 of fertilizer and pesticide used is wasted because we use too much.
- Dursban is lethal to fish in concentrations of less than 2 tablespoons in an Olympic size pool.
- Illegal disposal or spills of chemicals can take decades to break down while others persist in the tissues of fish, birds and other wildlife.
- Lawn chemicals account for the majority of wildlife poisoning as reported by the EPA.
- Lawn chemicals are absorbed through the skin, swallowed and inhaled while applying.
- Chemicals drift and settle on ponds, toys, pools and outside furniture.



## RESOLUTIONS

**Prevent the need for chemicals:** Fertilize enough to establish deep root system. Remove diseased plants rather than pouring chemicals on them.

**Integrated Pest Management:** Focuses on prevention and natural pest control instead of the use of chemicals. Natural materials such as ash and limestone is a repellent to bugs. Use ground cover plants and mulch to keep weeds down.

**Use native vegetation and "xeriscape" plants:** They require less water, fertilizers or pesticides. Xeriscaping conserves water and protects your environment. These promote optimum conditions and eliminates pests, harmful molds and fungi. Xeriscape also attracts good insects and birds to your yard.

**Select the right chemicals:** Use chemicals as a last resort. When possible choose natural means or less toxic product. Read the label and use the recommended application rate. Never apply near bodies of water, storm drains, waterways or water wells.

**Store chemicals properly:** Store in a well ventilated, dry area, never exposed to weather or moisture. Keep lids tight, bags tightly closed, dry products above liquids and off the floor. Inspect regularly for damaged containers. Contact TCEQ for information on appropriate disposal.

**Clean spills up:** Clean up spills as they occur. Wear protective clothing. Use absorbent material like kitty litter or sawdust then shovel it into a bag. Double bag it. For large spills and clean-ups contact TCEQ for instructions or the Stormwater Management Division at City of Abilene.