

What Can I Do For My Pond?

Put your pond on a diet!

You are what you eat, and just like you might suffer from too much sugar and fat, your pond suffers from too much nitrogen and other nutrients. So, here's how to put your pond on a diet and reach your goal for clean water:

- **Yard waste and falling leaves:** don't let them wash into storm drains: compost it or mulch it! Check our calendar of events for composting seminars.
- **Fertilize wisely:** twice a year may be enough! Spring and fall are the best times.
- **Know your dirt:** have your soil analyzed by the Cooperative Extension Service (744-5519), & find out what your soil really needs. They recommend only ½-pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet (how much are you applying?).
- **Slow is best:** look for the words “slow release” or “insoluble” on the fertilizer label, and it will stay in your yard, not in your pond! This goes for both nitrogen (“blue-chip” or “IBDU”) & potassium (“sulfur-coated sulfate of potash”).
- **Fertilizer-free zones:** stay 50 feet from the pond, and a few feet from pavement with fertilizer applications. The run-off to those areas will then have less fertilizer in it.
- **At the car wash:** wash your car over the grass using a mild biodegradable, **phosphate-free detergent**. And, please, conserve water by only running it during the wetting and rinsing process.

What's the point?

We can divide water pollution into two major categories: **point source pollution** and **nonpoint source pollution**. *Point sources* are specific points of pollution discharges, such as sewage treatment plants or industrial facilities. *Nonpoint sources* are dispersed and nonspecific; nonpoint source pollution includes litter, oils and grease on pavement, fertilizer runoff, and yard waste. **Non-point sources of pollution are the major cause of water quality degradation in our state (Florida Lakes, 1991).**

Storm water run-off => nonpoint source pollution => a polluted pond

Urban areas have lots of pavement, which means lots of stormwater runoff. This stormwater runoff carries nonpoint source pollutants, like those mentioned above, into storm drains. And where does all this pollution go? You guessed it right into your pond.