

Learn more

about natural alternatives to using chemicals on your lawn by contacting the following organizations

Beyond Pesticides

202.543.5450

www.beyondpesticides.org

Advocates safe, healthy, living lawns and landscapes with the use of organic and least toxic practices and products.

Environment and Human Health, Inc.

www.ehhi.org

Promotes human health through research, education and public policy.

National Pesticide Information Center

800.858.7378

www.npic.orst.edu

Provides objective, science-based information about pesticides and pesticide-related topics to enable people to make informed decisions about pesticides and their use.

Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides

541.344.5044

www.pesticide.org

Protects the health of people and the environment by advancing alternatives to pesticides.

Pesticide Action Network North America

415.981.1771

www.panna.org

Works to replace pesticide use with ecologically sound and socially just alternatives by linking local and international groups into an international citizens' action network.

Note: PRC does not endorse or recommend any of the groups or organizations listed in this brochure. Individuals seeking information or services from them should fully research their qualifications and capabilities as related to their needs.

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UPMC

Southwestern PA Household Hazardous Waste Task Force

(swpahhw.org) for contributing to the content of this brochure.



"Working to protect the environment since 1939"

64 S. 14th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15203
412.488.7490
www.prc.org

Sure Bets for Safe Lawn Care

Protect yourself — and your loved ones — from the hazards of lawn chemicals while still nurturing a beautiful lawn.

Pennsylvania Resources Council's mission is to promote conservation of our natural resources and protection of scenic beauty through public education and outreach in a collaborative effort with government agencies, business, charitable foundations and other nonprofit organizations.



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A plethora of products on the market today can make your lawn look beautiful. But have you ever wondered what effects these chemicals have on your yard, wildlife, groundwater and your own health? Whether you apply them yourself or hire a professional lawn care service, pesticides and other chemicals used on lawns can be very dangerous. Many are known to be carcinogenic (cancer causing) and can be hazardous to children and pets.

(source: Land Care Network website)

Pesticide use does pose some risk. Pesticide use cannot be made completely safe, and the level of risk posed by a chemical depends on its toxicity and the level of exposure. Improper or inappropriate use of pesticides and other lawn care products – by either homeowners or lawn care professionals – can increase the level of exposure, which, in turn, increases the level of risk posed to human health and the environment.

Always ask questions, read labels and do your research!

These are but a few common types of lawn care products that can contain potentially hazardous chemicals:

- weed killers
- insect killers and repellents
- fungicides
- plant growth regulators

Make your home a safer place by collecting such products and dropping them off at a “household hazardous waste” (HHW) collection event.

For more information, contact:

Pennsylvania Resources Council
412.488.7490
www.prc.org

or

Southwestern PA Household Hazardous Waste Task Force
412.488.7452
www.swpahhw.org

Did you know

... Pesticides are poisons and must be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Registration is not an approval rating or safety claim – nor does it guarantee the chemicals have been tested for environmental and human health effects. EPA only registers products and this should not be taken as a recommendation or endorsement of any product.

... Children may be especially sensitive to health risks from pesticides because

- Internal organs are still developing.
- In relation to body weight, children eat and drink more than adults, increasing exposure to pesticides in food and water.
- Playing on floors or lawns or putting objects in mouths increase a child’s exposure to pesticides used.

... Pesticide residue remains on grass even when dry. Lawn pesticides can enter a body through the mouth, nose, eyes and skin.

... Non-toxic weed control does not begin with finding safe herbicides to use on lawns. The “quick fix” that chemicals offer does not address the fact that weeds are a symptom indicating overall lawn condition and are not an isolated problem.

Using pesticides?

- Know your pest (weed, insect, disease). Purchase only the quantity needed.
- Select proper product and safety gear.
- Do not use more product than what’s recommended.
- Do not apply pesticides during windy conditions and keep it on your property.
- Keep people and pets off treated areas until the product dries.

Top 10 Tips for Safe Lawn Care

10) FEED SOIL Rake an inch of compost into your lawn each spring and fall.

9) FEED GRASS Leave grass clippings on the lawn – they provide nitrogen and reduce the amount of fertilizer needed by one-half.

8) RE-SEED ANNUALLY Seed in late summer/fall with native grasses. Thick turf controls weeds very well.

7) MOW HIGH Set your lawn mower to the highest setting. Grass should be 3 – 4 inches high, shading its roots, conserving moisture and keeping out weeds.

6) WATER LESS...BUT LONGER Once weekly, water in early morning for several hours. Over watering creates an ideal environment for pathogens to thrive.

5) CONTROL WEEDS Dig out dandelions or use an organic corn-gluten product that kills weed seeds and seedlings. Apply to established lawns early in spring for several years to control problem areas.

4) CONTROL PESTS NATURALLY Control common pests (grubs, sod webworms, chinch bugs) with applications of beneficial nematodes. Follow directions carefully – nematodes are fragile and must be kept cool and moist.

3) BE REALISTIC A healthy lawn includes weeds and insects. Lawns will function well and don’t need to be perfect.

2) GO NATIVE Some areas in your yard may not be right for growing grass, so consider options for growing native plants. Ask other gardeners, a librarian or your county extension agent for ideas.

1) DISPOSE OF EXCESS TOXIC MATERIALS

Attend a HHW drop-off event. Visit www.swpahhw.org or call 412-488-7452.