



**answering your  
questions...**

**fertilizers and our  
environment**



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*Smarter Ways to Grow*

# a healthy lawn... part of a healthy urban environment

Healthy lawns enhance our cities, parks and homes. Fertilizer plays a critical role in helping to keep lawns green and healthy. Information on how your lawn and the environment are benefited by fertilizer and tips on how to use fertilizer to help maintain a healthy lawn, are located inside...

## fertilizers for life

Fertilizers are the nutrients needed by plants to grow. The main nutrients needed by lawns are nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K).

**Nitrogen** makes up 78% of the atmosphere. It is an essential part of proteins in plant, animal and human life. Nitrogen gives grass its green appearance. Aside from giving a pleasing colour, nitrogen is needed so that plants can create their own food for growth.



**Phosphorus** exists naturally in certain rocks containing fossilized marine organisms. Phosphorus is needed for root development and is especially important in the first two years of establishing a lawn.



**Potassium** is a naturally occurring mineral. Potassium helps grass tolerate periods of stress such as drought, and winter conditions.





# benefits...

# tips...

## protecting the environment - the commitment we share

We all have a responsibility to protect our environment and our waterways. Almost everything we do and the choices we make can affect the world we live in. Fertilizer use is no exception. Using fertilizer to create a healthy lawn is consistent with protecting the environment. This can only be achieved by everyone doing their part. *The benefits for everyone of healthy lawns are:*

- Generates oxygen. One acre of grass produces more oxygen per year than one acre of rainforest.
- Provides a cooling effect and reduces the strain on energy needed by air conditioners. Healthy lawns, trees and shrubs can reduce air temperature by up to 40°F.
- Reduces soil erosion and run-off. Increased run-off can lead to an increase in the amount of sediment and naturally occurring soil phosphorus making its way to waterways.
- Helps improve water quality and quantity. A healthy lawn is a significant and important filtration system. It helps recharge groundwater supplies and reduces the strain on municipal water treatment systems.
- Creates a safe and stable surface for playgrounds, parks and sports fields.

## lawn fertilizer right product, right rate, right time, right place

Nutrients contained in fertilizer, compost and manure have to be used with care to protect our water and air. The **Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI)** has developed the **Right Product@Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place™** system to help homeowners apply home gardening nutrients responsibly.

Although developed in Canada, this concept has been widely adopted into best management practices by industry groups in the U.S.A. and around the world. The system was originally designed for use in agriculture; however, the basic principles apply to anyone using fertilizer. *For a homeowner, getting it right can be made simple by using the following:*

### Right Product

- Use the correct fertilizer for your soil conditions. Have your soil tested every couple of years to determine what type of fertilizer nutrients are needed.
- When purchasing your own fertilizer, look for products that contain slowly available nitrogen.
- Carefully read and follow the directions on the fertilizer bag. Those directions are there to ensure the best results for your lawn and the environment.

### Right Rate

- Use the right amount of fertilizer. Follow fertilizer rate recommendations. More is not always better.
- Too much fertilizer can result in burning and yellow strips in your lawn.
- Use a good quality spreader and make sure to check the setting.

### Right Time

- Use fertilizer at the right time of the year. Know your lawn and the grass variety. Different grass varieties require different fertilizer timings for best results.
- Lawns go through a normal period of dormancy during the driest parts of the summer. During that time, you should not fertilize your lawn – let it rest.
- During dormancy, reduce the amount of foot-traffic and stop mowing. As the rain returns grass will green up in 7-10 days.
- Fertilizer shouldn't be applied when the ground is frozen or just before a heavy rain is expected.

### Right Place

- Keep fertilizer off hard surfaces such as driveways, patios and sidewalks. Clean up any spills immediately.
- Leave a small strip unfertilized on the edge of the lawn.
- Avoid fertilizing steep slopes or in gullies.
- Make sure fertilizer stays where it has the most benefit to your lawn and the least impact on the environment and our waterways. Avoid run-off into storm sewers, rivers, lakes and ponds.
- Fertilizer should only be used as a source of nutrients for lawns. Fertilizer should not be used to de-ice walkways and driveways.

**When in doubt, get advice from your lawn care company, lawn and garden center, or check the fertilizer company's website for helpful tips.**

# ...nutrients for life



Agrium Advanced Technologies is committed to protecting and preserving our environment. We are the world leader in controlled and slow release fertilizers and our products are engineered with advanced-generation coatings and other technology to prevent leaching and nutrient loss to the environment. Please contact us to learn more.



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