

THINK
water!

Further information?

The South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) with assistance by a group of volunteers, the *Phosphorus Action Group* runs a program entitled 'The Phosphorus Awareness Project'. This program seeks to promote the appropriate use of fertilisers and detergents, and enhance people's awareness of the link between their backyards and the surrounding surface and groundwater systems.



Volunteering opportunities are available or for more information contact **Amy Krupa**, the Coordinator of the *Phosphorus Action Group* on **9458 5664** or via email at: amykrupa@sercul.org.au.

Alternatively visit the SERCUL website at www.sercul.org.au/pag.html

THINK
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FertiliseWISE

Protect and
maintain our
local water
supplies



Town of Cottesloe

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With the current pressure on all of Western Australia's water sources, it's time for us all to do our bit to protect and maintain local water supplies.

Did You Know?

Traditional chemical fertilisers only add nutrients to your garden – not organic matter. This matter is essential for supporting life in your soil. Consider using an 'organic' fertiliser in your garden instead such as mulch, compost or products derived from worm farming. Fish emulsions and seaweed products are also great and are readily available from nurseries and supermarkets.



What's the problem?

Fertilisers are a major contributor to surface and groundwater contamination due to the chemicals contained within them, especially phosphorus. Phosphorus is present in the natural environment in low levels, but due to many human activities it readily accumulates and seeps into our groundwater systems – the same groundwater systems that we rely on for much of our freshwater consumption needs. Additionally, fertilisers run off into the stormwater system through roadside drains, collect in sumps and leach into the groundwater system.

Fertilisers also wash into the river and sea, creeks and swamps, with the potential to do major damage to reefs and aquatic life.

There are many ways in which we can alter our behaviour to reduce the risks of fertilisers affecting our local water supplies.

What you can do to help?

- Minimise lawn areas or plant an alternative lawn
- Grow local native plants – they require less water and fertiliser.
- Minimise the use of deciduous trees
- Use mulch not fertiliser where possible
- If you must use a fertiliser, use a complete fertiliser with a Nitrogen to Phosphorus to Potassium (N:P:K) ratio of 10:1:6.
- Use a slow release fertiliser
For example; Osmocote, Dynamic Lifter or a specially formulated 'tree tablet'.
- Only apply sparingly in spring or early autumn, not in winter or summer
- Fertilise only when symptoms of deficiency occur e.g. yellowing
- Use liquid fertiliser if you have a sub surface irrigation system
- Compost your garden waste
- Don't over water
- Don't fertilise near waterways or road verges
- Don't let grass clippings or leaves go down the drain
- Wash your car on the lawn (if you have any!) not on the driveway
- Pick up after your dog
- Use phosphorus free detergents (Always read the labels)

