

## Alternatives to Conventional Pesticides

Certain of these pest-management products, designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are intended for controlling pests in outdoor settings. Examples include minimum-risk pesticides with active ingredients like garlic or clove oil. The biological pesticides *Bacillus thuringiensis* and insecticidal soaps and oils are other alternatives. For more information, visit: [www.epa.gov/opp00001/biopesticides/regtools/25b\\_list.htm](http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/biopesticides/regtools/25b_list.htm)

## Read and Follow the Label

If you use a chemical product, read the label and follow the instructions. Check the label for water advisories to help prevent environmental contamination. To learn more about how to read a product label, visit: [www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials\\_minerals\\_pdf/pm3.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/pm3.pdf)



**Did you know...** Tips in this brochure can help you prevent pollution in Lakes Erie and Ontario, wherever you live in the 33-county watershed.

## Let Us Hear from You!

Take DEC's Be Green Great Lakes survey to tell us how you care for your land and manage pests. The survey is available through April 30, 2013 at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/76234.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/76234.html)

Information on DEC's Be Green in the Great Lakes project is available at that site or by contacting [BGGL@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:BGGL@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

NYS law prohibits use of phosphorus-containing fertilizers on most lawns. Such fertilizers can contribute unwanted phosphorus to the Great Lakes and other water resources. To learn more: [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/67239.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/67239.html)

For a resource list on land care and pest-management practices, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/76234.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/76234.html)

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# Be Green in the Great Lakes



## Land Care and Pest Management Practices



Funded by the Environmental Protection Agency

## Human Activity and the Great Lakes

The Great Lakes are the largest surface freshwater system on Earth. Even with their vast expanse, the lakes are vulnerable to pollutants. The approximately 510 cubic miles of fresh water in Lakes Erie and Ontario are essential for many purposes, such as drinking water, recreation, industry and shipping. The ways millions of New Yorkers in the Great Lakes watershed care for their land and manage pests can help protect this precious resource.

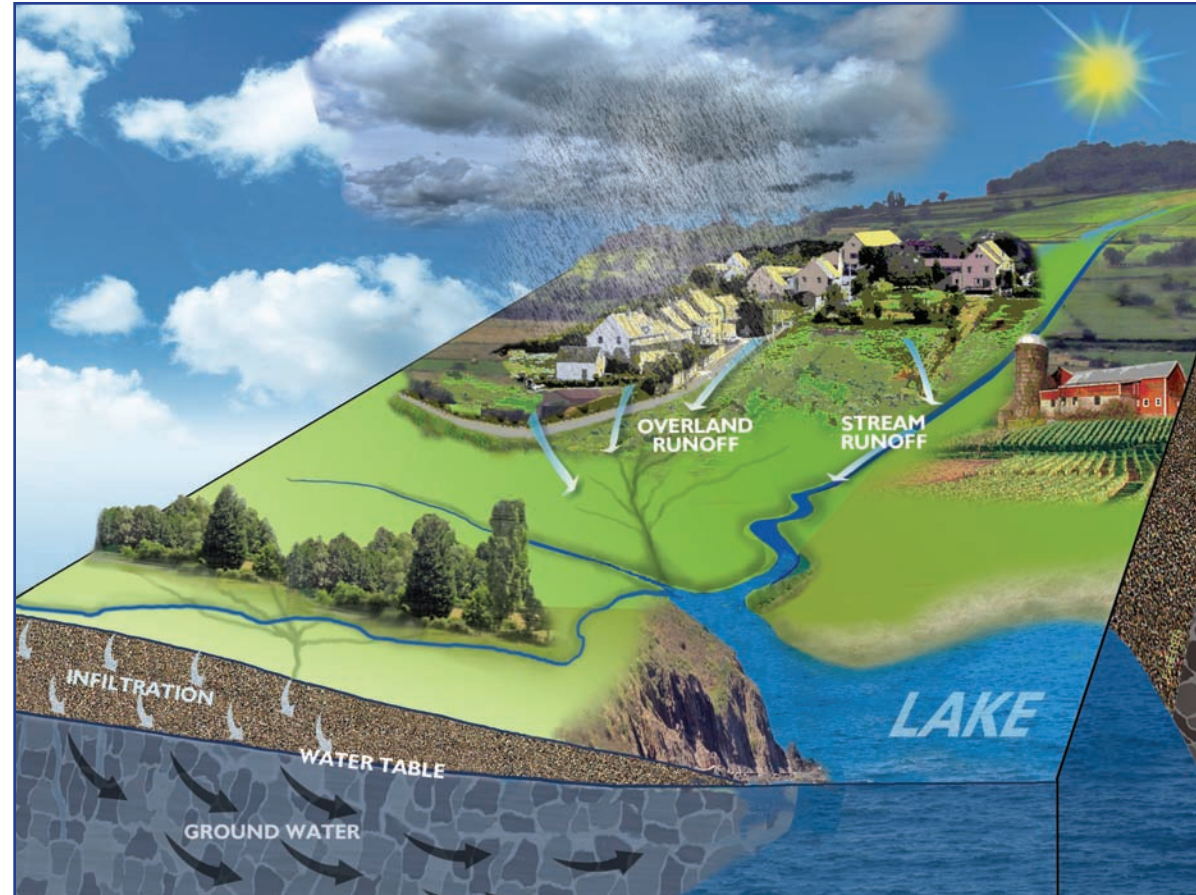
Land care and pest-management products such as pesticides and fertilizers—if not properly used, stored, and disposed—can enter the Great Lakes by:

- Leaching through soil to surface water or groundwater
- Washing off lawns, trees or gardens into surface waters
- Entering storm and household drains and traveling to water resources

## Pollution Prevention

Help prevent pollution in the Great Lakes by using land and yard care methods that focus on avoiding problems and building sustainable landscapes. Tips on preventive measures in this brochure are adopted from organic land care and other management approaches.

Organic land care is a method based, in part, on preventive measures. Learn about DEC's **Be Green Organic Yards NY** initiative and get green lawn and garden tips at [www.dec.ny.gov/public/65071.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/65071.html)



Pollutants from human activities can run off into a lake by surface waters and groundwater in the watershed.

## Soil and Plant Health Tips

Healthy soil and foliage are the first line of defense against pests and plant diseases. To improve the conditions of your soil and plants, know the features of your property:

- Determine the types of soil present and use enrichment additives if needed.
- Know the locations of shady, sunny and wet areas in order to help avoid fungi and sun damage.
- Identify diseases and pests (weeds, insects, fungus and rodents) present in your lawn, trees and gardens as well as effective ways to control them.

- Learn about and use grass, plant, tree and shrub varieties which thrive in the conditions in your yard and are less prone to disease and pest problems.
- Choose management methods which specifically target the pests or diseases present.

### Conserve water during land care:

- Locate the sprinkler so that it waters the lawn, not the pavement.
- Water early in the day, only when necessary, and at a rate soil can absorb.
- Follow community water restrictions.

## Non-chemical Land and Yard Care Tips

These tips help promote healthy lawns and gardens. They also help prevent pest infestations and keep chemicals out of ground and surface waters, including the Great Lakes:

- Mow grass less frequently. Use a sharp blade and mow no shorter than three inches. Use a mulching mower, and leave clippings on the ground.
- Choose the right grass for the soil and climate, and seed at the correct rate.
- Use weed-free mulch to conserve moisture, protect newly seeded areas from erosion and suppress weeds in plant beds.
- Reseed small patches of dead grass before weeds move in.
- Plant other ground covers or foliage that thrive in shaded areas where grass will not prosper.
- Improve drainage, trim lower branches to increase sunlight and use ground covers in shady or damp areas.
- Pull weeds by hand with a tool which removes the root.
- Attract insects that are natural enemies of certain pests.
- Choose pest-resistant grasses and plants.
- Establish stone paths in high-traffic areas where grass is sparse.
- Use fencing around foliage to deter rodents and small mammals.