

Say No Thanks to Lawn Fertilizers & Pesticides

Lawn fertilizers and chemicals do not stay on your lawn. The nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizers travel great distances and end up in the groundwater we drink and in water bodies like the Westport River. Nitrogen and phosphorus are very harmful to our water. Fertilizers that reach the water can kill fish, shellfish and aquatic vegetation.

EASY WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR NITROGEN

- Let nature provide the nutrients.
- Lawns usually need much less fertilizer than is advertised.
- Have your soil professionally tested.
- Add lime if your soil is acidic.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn for natural compost.
- Aerate compacted turf.
- Let clover grow. It is a free source of nutrients.

You Can Help Stop Pollution

Maintain Your Septic System

Keep it Protected—Get it Inspected!

Have your septic tank inspected and pumped out by a licensed septic tank contractor (every three years as required by the Board of Health).

Don't Strain your Drain!

Use water efficiently to avoid overtaxing your system. Fix household leaks, run the dishwasher and clothes washer only on full loads, and consider installing high-efficiency fixtures.

Think at the Sink!

Don't pour grease, fats, or harmful chemicals like paints and solvents down your sink. They can clog or harm your system.

Don't Overload the Commode!

Do not flush non-degradable items such as dental floss, diapers, coffee grounds, or feminine hygiene products.

Shield your Field!

Care for your drainfield by only planting grass, not driving or parking on it, and reducing roof and surface water drainage near the drainfield.

Time to Replace? Upgrade Your Septic.

Get Ahead of the Game

Some time in the future the Town will be ordered to take action to reduce nitrogen inputs to our impaired waters. Locally, advanced onsite nitrogen removal systems and small community scale systems may be part of a solution, as well passive alternatives. Eventually, our Town must develop comprehensive strategies to manage all nitrogen sources to meet adopted TMDLs.

If you're repairing or building new construction, consider replacing your septic system with one that removes nitrogen. There are approved systems for use in Massachusetts.

More info: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/wastewater/title-5-innovative-alternative-technology-approvals.html>

Westport River Watershed Alliance • PO BOX 3427 • Westport, MA
508-636-3016 • www.westportwatershed.org



The Westport River Watershed Alliance (WRWA) was incorporated in 1976, as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. WRWA's mission is to restore, protect, celebrate and sustain the natural resources of the Westport River and its watershed. WRWA's goal is to keep people informed about topics regarding the health of the Westport River and its watershed and to raise awareness and understanding of the concerns facing the Westport River and its environment.

Do Your Part Join WRWA

- ___ \$50 Friend of the watershed
- ___ \$100 Contributor to the watershed
- ___ \$250 Steward of the watershed
- ___ \$500 Guardian of the watershed
- ___ \$1000 Benefactor of the watershed
- ___ \$___ Surprise Us!

Name _____
Mailing address _____
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e-mail _____

Please make checks payable to **WRWA**.
All membership contributions are
100% tax-deductible.

Mail to:
Westport River Watershed Alliance
P.O. Box 3427
Westport, Massachusetts 02790-0703

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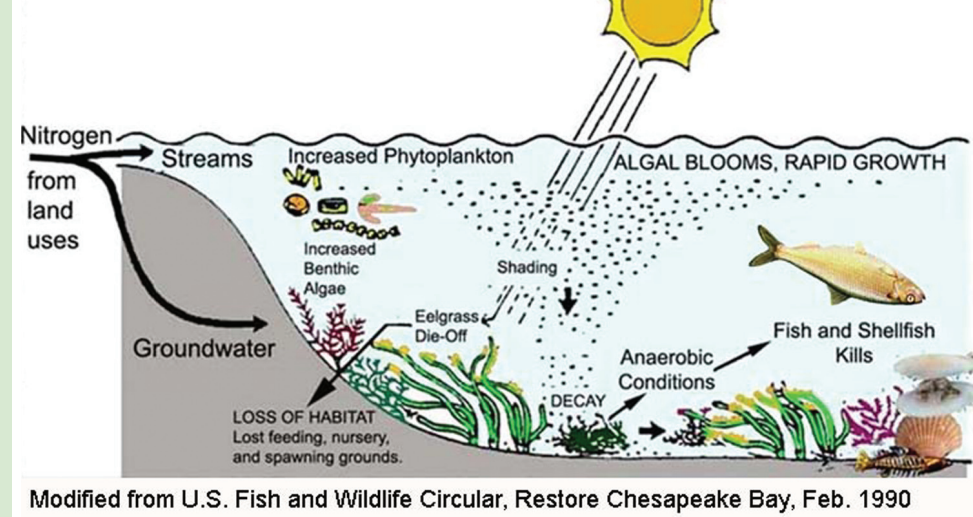
So what's the big deal with nitrogen pollution?



It mainly comes from us humans and our stuff. Westport's homes have septic systems, manicured lawns, and paved roads. Residential septic systems are one of the largest sources of nitrogen pollution in the Westport River. Most people don't realize that the typical septic system—even a new, properly functioning Title 5 system—doesn't remove much nitrogen.

In clean water, fish and shellfish thrive, and people can enjoy the water. But when the water has too much nitrogen, it becomes cloudy and murky. Eelgrass can't grow, and fish and shellfish disappear. Whether you live near the water or several miles away, your septic system contributes nitrogen pollution to the Westport River. **Fortunately, you can stop many smaller sources of nitrogen pollution from having a big impact on the Westport River.**

What You Need to Know about the Westport River's Nitrogen TMDL



This summer, officials from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) had a public hearing on the draft report: "Westport River Estuarine System Total Maximum Daily Loads For Total Nitrogen (CN-375.0)". TMDL stands for Total Maximum Daily Load. A TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can accept and still meet the state's standards for public health and healthy ecosystems. The federal Clean Water Act requires all states to identify waterbodies that do not meet state standards and develop TMDLs for each of them. The Westport River Watershed Alliance supports finalization of the TMDL so that our community can address the nutrient loading problem that is degrading our River's water quality.

This TMDL was determined through years of scientific assessment and is specific to the Westport River. WRWA was instrumental in collecting the data used to generate the Massachusetts Estuaries report—the technical report for the Westport River. WRWA was a volunteer project partner with the Coastal Systems Program at the School for Marine Science and Technology at UMASS Dartmouth. After public comment and final approval by the EPA, the TMDL will serve as a guide for future activities. At the public hearing, DEP officials suggested that the Town of Westport should work together with the DEP to begin actions to develop a Comprehensive

Water Management Plan (CWMP). This plan will be a guiding document to help Westport decide how best to implement the TMDL and achieve the desired water quality goals. The TMDL process requires communities to develop a plan to restore waterbodies and make progress toward restoring ecological health. This "adaptive management" approach is based on taking action, measuring its impact, and adjusting future steps as necessary.

BOTTOM LINE IS....The Westport River needs a plan to limit the amount of nitrogen entering the river.

We know that our current level of development and infrastructure is adding too much nitrogen to the river. The TMDL report will provide the state-approved proof that much of this nitrogen is coming from the Title 5 septic systems (often called onsite-wastewater treatment systems) within the watershed.

Both short term and long term goals must be established with the eventual result that nitrogen from future growth must be limited, and nitrogen from existing sources must be reduced. Regionally, impacted embayments must be protected and restored through a combined strategy of managing growth, reducing fertilizer use, and promoting advanced onsite sewage treatment technologies capable of reducing nitrogen. WRWA plans to be an active partner in this planning process.

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