

Choose earth friendly landscaping

What's the issue?

When landscaping your yard you can protect your kids, pets, and the environment from harm. By choosing plants that are native to Michigan and by practicing good lawn-care practices, you can help prevent pollution of our lakes and streams.

What are some helpful tips?

Here are some simple steps you can take to landscape and maintain a healthy yard and help keep our water clean. Give them a try. A few simple changes can make a big difference!

Mow high. Make your lawn cheaper and easier to maintain by mowing high (three inches is recommended). Taller grass requires less water, promotes root growth, and shades out weeds.

Use mulch. Place a thick layer of mulch (e.g., four inches) around trees and plants. This helps retain water, reduce weeds, and minimize the need for pesticides.

Go native. Select plants native to Michigan. Native plants are better equipped to tolerate Michigan's climate, require less fertilizing, and are more disease resistant.

Variety is the spice of life. Using a wide variety of plants helps control pests and minimizes the need for pesticides.

Water wisely. Generally, your lawn needs about an inch of water a week. Over-watering lawns results in shallow-rooted plants that are less tolerant of heat and drought, and more prone to disease. Avoid over-watering by using a rain gauge and watering only when necessary, instead of on a fixed schedule.

Use less for pests. Pesticides and herbicides can be harmful to our kids, pets, and the environment. So, use pesticides and herbicides sparingly. Limit applications to problem areas instead of applying to the entire area (e.g., weed and feed).

Rake it or leave it. Follow the guidelines in your community for leaf pick-up. Never rake leaves into or near storm drains, ditches, or streams. Decaying leaves use up the water's oxygen, harming fish and the aquatic insects that fish depend on to survive. Better yet, mow leaves into your lawn. Leaves and grass clippings are good fertilizers for your lawn.