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FERTILIZE SMART LEE COUNTY

FORT MYERS, Fla. (May 31, 2011) – With the south Florida rainy season just around the corner, the Lee County Division of Natural Resources reminds everyone that fertilizer use rules change at the traditional start of the wet season, on June 1st. Of particular concern to most residents is the prohibition of the application of phosphorus and nitrogen during the wet season. To ensure the quality of our coastal waters, critical to our environment, economy, and recreation and protect from excessive nutrients that can cause harmful algal blooms, no fertilizers containing phosphorous and nitrogen can be applied during the period of June 1st through September 30th. Potassium and other soil amendments may be applied during the wet season period.

During the rest of the year, fertilizer containing Phosphorus and Nitrogen is limited. Fertilizer use is also prohibited within 10 feet of a water body, seawall, or wetland. And, if you use a fertilizer spreader, you are required to have a deflector shield to prevent nutrient spread into water body buffers and impervious surfaces. The application of nitrogen must be labeled as at least 50 percent slow-release.

Landscape maintenance professionals are also subject to the ordinance. The ordinance requires the registration and training of both professional landscapers and institutional landscapers, and sets best-management landscape and fertilizer practices.

These precise limits are designed to get homeowners, association members and landscape professionals to think of the connection between fertilizing practices and the quality of our area waters. The real trick is to fertilize as little as possible and only when and where it's needed.

For more information on the Lee County Fertilizer Ordinance please visit www.fertilizesmart.com.