What's the connection between green lawns and algae in our waterways?

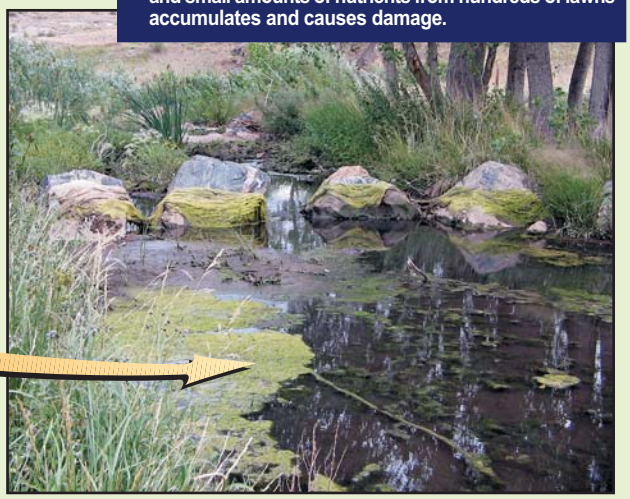
Excess fertilizer and nutrients wash off our lawns and into our waterways.

Rainfall and over-irrigation wash the fertilizer that contains phosphorous and nitrogen from a lawn to the nearest waterway. The storm drain system, which is designed to prevent flooding, also carries nutrients and pollution from our properties to the nearest pond or creek.

When summer temperatures reach 80F˚ or greater, algae may grow in a pond or other slow flowing waterway.

In addition to generating a foul odor, decaying algae uses up the oxygen that fish and other aquatic wildlife need to survive. This is a concern for wildlife and people because properties near waterways are typically 5-30% higher in value than properties not near water. Protecting our waterways protects wildlife and our property values.

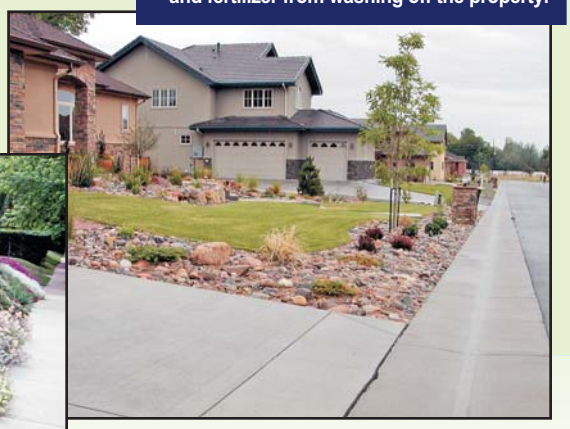
▶ Over-irrigation washes phosphorous and nitrogen into the storm drain system.



▶ The storm drain system empties into our waterways and small amounts of nutrients from hundreds of lawns accumulates and causes damage.

So, what can you do?

- Use less fertilizer.
- Install a Xeriscape buffer strip between the lawn and sidewalk to absorb lawn runoff.
- Replace lawn areas with Xeriscape vegetation, which uses less fertilizer and water.



▶ A Xeriscape buffer strip keeps excess water and fertilizer from washing off the property.

photo courtesy of Denver Water

▶ Xeriscape landscaping uses less fertilizer and water.

For additional information please contact:
Jefferson County
Planning and Zoning
303.271.8700
http://planning.jeffco.us.