HEALTHY LAWNS
AND
LANDSCAPES

in association with the
Chatham Township
Environmental Commission

Imagine your kids playing on
grass that isn’t treated with
pesticides.
Your kids can play on
good grass where you
never need a “Keep off,
Pesticide Application”
warning sign.

Imagine watering costs cut
in half!
Healthy soils with thriving
micro-organisms lead to
deep-rooted grass.
Deep roots require less
watering, less fertilizing,
and save you money.

Imagine no mowing!
Turn part of your lawn
into a landscape with
a diversity of hardy
native plants, flowers,
ground covers, trees
and shrubs. Native,
deer-resistant bushes include Holly,
Magnolia, Spicebush, Sumac, and
Witch Hazel.

Now is the time to make
the move to non-toxic
lawn care. For yourself,
your children, your pets
and the environment.

PESTICIDES ARE:
GRUB CONTROL, WEED
KILLER, FUNGUS TREATMENT, INSECT
SPRAY, CRAB GRASS PREVENTER,
INSECTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

Pesticides are poisons. Pesticide
exposure in humans has been
associated with birth defects,
numerous cancers, Parkinson’s
disease and other neurological
disorders, male and female infertility
and immune system problems.

An EPA registration number does not
mean that a product is safe. The
long term health effects of most
pesticide ingredients, their breakdown products, and their
interactions are not well known.

Lawn pesticides get carried indoors
by shoes, paws and air currents.
Once inside, pesticides linger in
carpets, dust, toys and air. Away
from sunlight and water, pesticides can persist for many months.

Pesticides contaminate drinking
water. Use of pesticides in urban and
suburban communities contributes
significantly to contamination of our
water supplies.

Children are particularly vulnerable
to the toxic effects of pesticides.
Using household and lawn pesticides
can put children at risk for birth defects,
cancers and behavioral problems.

Children are more at risk because of
their size and behaviors. In a recent
study of preschoolers, 99% had one
or more pesticides in their bodies.
The easiest, most cost effective way to a beautiful, healthy lawn is to work with nature, not against it. A healthy lawn needs nutrients and microbe-rich soil to develop deep rooted, dense turf that competes successfully with weeds. Dense turf is beautiful and low maintenance. It naturally resists drought, insects and diseases. Pesticides are not necessary for a beautiful lawn. In fact, they can do more harm than good. They kill the microbial life necessary for healthy soil and can kill the pest’s natural enemies. This invites disease and insect infestation, which leads to more pesticide use and traps you in an unhealthy, costly chemical cycle.

Basic lawn care tips:
1. Spread 1/4” compost, or sprinkle organic fertilizer, each fall.
2. Seed with a mix of hardy grasses.
3. Mow high! Keep mower blades sharp.
4. Leave grass clippings on lawn as fertilizer.
5. Water only when soil is dry 6” down. 1” water per watering.
6. Strive for a 15 inches or easier  leaf raking.

February & March
Sharpen mower blades. Raise mower blade to 3 inches.
Add soil amendments based on soil test. Re-seed bare patches, or apply corn gluten to prevent weed germination. Always leave clippings on lawn to fertilize.

May and June
Check for weeds, pull out by hand.
Check for insect pests. Monitor for grubs damage; spot treat with milky spore (once every ten years) and/or with beneficial nematodes (once yearly for 2 or 3 years).

August
You may allow lawn to go dormant during drought. It will green up after rain.

September and October
Best time to overseed (generously). Fertilize if needed (sparingly). Aerate if soil is compacted. Lime if autumn soil test finds pH lower than 6.8.

November
Final mowing at 2 inches for easier leaf raking.