



For immediate release

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Carefree Lawns & Landscapes Workshop in Alpharetta

Having a "green" lawn does not necessarily mean you have to labor to have a fit yard. Many factors can affect the health and quality of a lawn and affect the health of a nearby stream. There are several basic principles of yard care that keep a lawn attractive. The Clean Water Campaign and the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service are offering lawn care workshops to cover these principles throughout metro Atlanta.

As rain and irrigation water wash over the lawns parking lots, streets and driveways, picking up pollutants and debris and carries them into storm drains or directly into waterways. This is a critical problem for metro Atlanta, as we rely on a finite supply of surface water sources for most of our drinking water supplies.

The workshop, presented by University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service Agents, will teach how to reduce the cost of maintenance by over applying nutrients and pesticides that may not be necessary to remedy lawn problems. Identifying the problem and accurately treating the problem are two basic ways to prevent water pollution. Reusing yard waste such as leaves and grass can be beneficial to the health of your yard. If yard waste is kept out of the streets, drainage ditches and storm drains, residents will be preventing polluted stormwater runoff from flowing down streets and prevent flooding.

Controlling weeds and insects is another one of the topics presenters will address. Participants will learn also how to care for turf and ornamentals as well as how to identify yard pests and find out about solutions that address the problem without polluting the environment. The program will also include tips on composting, the management of yard clippings in general and the use of fertilizers.

According to a survey conducted by Data Research Services in September 2002, half of Atlanta-area residents who have lawns to maintain do the work themselves. Most do not know that using excessive amounts of fertilizer and pesticides wastes money, does little to improve the appearance of the yard, threatens fish and other aquatic life and endangers the health of rivers, lakes and streams. Nutrients from fertilizers — usually phosphates — enter rivers, lakes and streams and stimulate the growth of algae. Excessive algae growth consumes oxygen in lakes and ponds, thus killing fish and other aquatic life.

Registration is required for the **free** workshops. Register online at www.cleanwatercampaign.com or call 404-463-3259. The upcoming lawn care workshop will be held on **April 13 (6:30 PM)** at Alpharetta Engineering and Public Works located at 1790 Hembree Road in Alpharetta, GA 30004.

*The **Clean Water Campaign** is a cooperative, multi-agency public education initiative spearheaded by local governments in metro Atlanta, supported by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Its mission is to build awareness of water quality problems and solutions in the 16-county District. For more information about the Clean Water Campaign, contact Kelley O'Brien at 404.463.3259.*

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