



What you need to know about...

Lawn and fertilizer basics

Lawn maintenance tips:

- Use a mulching mower. This allows cut grass to be recycled and used as fertilizer.
- Blow clippings back into the lawn, not the street.
- Add lawn clippings and leaves to your compost pile. Compost is one of nature's best mulches and soil amendment and can be used in landscaped areas around the home.

Fertilizer basics:

- Select slow-release fertilizers; they are kinder to the environment and usually more cost-effective. Also, select fertilizers that are low in phosphorus (P), as most Marion County soils have plenty of it..
- Fertilizers can't fix problems caused by incorrect soil acidity. Conduct a soil test to make sure you are selecting plants appropriate for your soil conditions and determine fertilizer needs of plants.
- Buy fertilizers formulated for the plants you want to fertilize. When selecting fertilizer, look at the three numbers on the bag (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium). Nitrogen and phosphorus can pollute water.
- Follow instructions on the product bag. Apply only the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
- Do not apply fertilizer prior to a rain event. Too much water will wash away the chemicals. These could end up in a nearby river, lake or spring.
- Clean up any fertilizer that spills on sidewalks or roadways.
- When spreading, consider using a drop spreader. It provides better control than a rotary spreader, which flings particles over a distance.
- If hiring a fertilizer service provider, verify that the applicator is licensed.

*The Marion County Fertilizer Education Program is brought to you by the Marion County Board of County Commissioners and the UF/IFAS Marion County Extension Service.
For more information, call 352-671-8686.*

