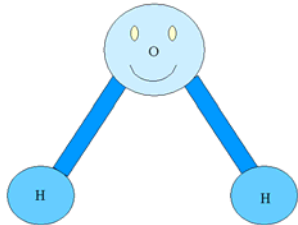


# Water Ways

Indian River County Extension Service Water Quality Program

Spring 2007

Volume 4, Issue 2



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**HYDRO'S WATER TIP**

Never dump anything into storm drains, ponds, and canals.



**DID YOU KNOW...**

Because of impervious surfaces like pavement and rooftops, a typical city block generates more than 5 times more runoff than a woodland area of the same size.

## KEEPING ALGAE UNDER CONTROL

We've all seen it happen. Our community's lake looks great and then a little bit of green scum begins to form at the surface. Suddenly, the scum balloons into a huge blanket, and the lake becomes a mess.

Having a lake adds a lot to a community, and landscaping practices can affect whether it is nice or yuck. In order to keep lakes looking nice, it is important not to give the algae extra food. Algae really enjoy munching on nitrogen and phosphorus that is present in fertilizer and grass clippings because they need these nutrients just like grass and ornamental shrubs. Algal blooms form due to large amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water, and the blooms may negatively impact the pond along with making it unattractive.

Algal blooms cover the surface of the water and decrease the amount of dissolved oxygen available to aquatic organisms. This can lead to fish kills due to algae consuming oxygen instead of producing it when sunlight is unavailable. When this oxygen depletion occurs, fish die. In addition, the low dissolved oxygen problem also may be compounded by the death of oxygen producing aquatic plants due to blooms blocking sunlight to them.

To keep these negative effects from occurring in your lake, landscape maintenance practices should be adjusted.

- Don't over fertilize. Follow University of Florida recommendations for your particular grass species. They are available online at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> and from the extension service.
- When fertilizing near a lake, leave a "Ring of Responsibility" at the water's edge. This is an untreated area. If applying a granular fertilizer with a spreader that has a deflector shield or a liquid fertilizer, the untreated area should extend at least 3 feet from the edge of the lake. If there is no deflector shield on the granular fertilizer spreader, the untreated area should extend at least 10 feet from the edge of the lake.
- Properly irrigate. Irrigate 2 times per week from March to October and 1 to 2 times every 2 weeks from November to February. Apply 1/2 to 3/4 inch of water during irrigation.

(Continued on page 2)

## ALGAE (continued from page 1)

Landscape maintenance practices to help control algae:

- Cut grass at the correct height for your species of grass. This information is available online at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> and from the extension service.
- Make sure grass clippings do not blow or get dumped into the lake. This includes not sweeping or blowing grass clippings into the street. The next rainstorm or irrigation will likely carry them into the lake.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn for “grasscycling.” When you mow regularly, clippings quickly decompose and release nutrients that fertilize the lawn. Grasscycling can supply about a quarter of the fertilizer needed each season.

By adopting some of these practices, you can help improve your lake’s appearance and keep it from being an unlimited buffet for the algae.

If you have any questions, the Indian River County extension service can help you.

## NEW FERTILIZER RULE PROPOSED

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is proposing a new rule on application rates in fertilizers. This rule will help protect water resources by reducing the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that is applied in urban areas.

FDACS approves all directions for use on fertilizers, and only products that will be approved will be no to low phosphate fertilizers. According to Terence McElroy of FDAC, “the new rule will require that all fertilizer products labeled for use on urban turf, sports turf, and lawns be limited to the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus needed to support healthy turf maintenance.”

Once the proposed rule makes its way through the rulemaking process, it will likely become effective in the spring.

The complete notice may be found at [http://www.flaes.org/pdf/Revision5E-1%2000313107\\_1.pdf](http://www.flaes.org/pdf/Revision5E-1%2000313107_1.pdf)

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## IRRIGATION TIPS

- Irrigate 2 times per week (March to October); 1 - 2 times every 2 weeks (November to February).
- Apply ½ to ¾ inch of water during each irrigation.
- Wean the grass off a heavy watering schedule. If the irrigation system is scheduled to come on for more than 5 days a week, reduce it to 3 days a week for 2 weeks. Then reduce the irrigation schedule to 2 days a week. Not only is this better for the grass, it is the irrigation rule from St. John’s River Water Management District.
- Inspect the irrigation system regularly to check for leaks in hoses, pipes, and fittings.
- Repair broken or clogged spray heads and emitters and adjust them to keep them from watering the pavement. Nothing grows on pavement, so water that lands on driveways and sidewalks is wasted.



## GET PESTICIDE CEUS FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME

The University of Florida/ IFAS Pesticide Information Office in cooperation with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is offering training modules, which can be completed from your computer, that provide continuing education units (CEUs) for license holders.

The goal of the program is to give pesticide applicators a convenient way to earn CEUs, which are required for license renewal.

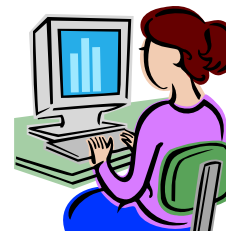
Currently, there are a total of 21 modules in a wide variety of categories but more are in the works to be added later. The modules can be found on <http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu>. Each costs \$20 and takes about 50 minutes to complete. The website directs you to the IFAS Bookstore's website, where the modules can be purchased.

You just need Macromedia Flash installed on the computer to view the presentations. If you have any technical issues with the modules, please contact Nathan Whidden at [nwhidden@ufl.edu](mailto:nwhidden@ufl.edu)

Here is a small sampling of some of the modules available now.

- The Value of Pesticides in Agricultural Crops in Florida
- Agricultural Crop Pest Control
- Worker Protection Standard
- Pesticide Labeling
- Worker Protection Standards Training
- Agricultural Row Crop Pest Control - Application Equipment
- Spray Adjuvants
- Control of Woody Brush

Please note that one module does not fit all. Please visit <http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu> for more information on each module, including approved categories and descriptions.



## MASTER GARDENERS

Not sure how much water to irrigate your St. Augustine grass? Is a mystery pest eating your hibiscus? Just ask the Master Gardeners!

Master Gardeners is a volunteer program made up of trained residents that answer your gardening questions. The valuable information these volunteers dole out comes from the latest research of the University of Florida.

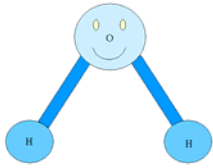
These experts can be reached by telephone at (772) 770-5030 or may be visited in person.

## POND APPEAL TIP

Does your pond need a little pizzazz? How about planting some native aquatic plants. Not only do they add color and texture, the plants help remove nitrogen, phosphorus and loose soil from the water. Here are a few suggestions.

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| ▪ Pickerelweed | ▪ Water Lily     |
| ▪ Duck Potato  | ▪ Blue Flag Iris |
| ▪ Bulrush      | ▪ Arrowhead      |
| ▪ Golden Canna | ▪ Water Primrose |
| ▪ Star Rush    | ▪ Club Rush      |

For more information about these and other aquatic plants visit <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu>



## HYDRO'S KIDS PAGE

### HYDRO'S WATER CYCLE JOURNEYS - ALGAE GROWS

Our new friend Algae was telling Speck and me about how she helps to clean up the water in the **stormwater pond**. Algae takes **nutrients** out of the water, and that makes her grow. Nutrients come from **fertilizer**.

It was very sunny that day. While we visited with Algae, she got bigger and bigger. The **sun** helps Algae grow.

Speck and I said goodbye to Algae and floated down to the bottom of the pond.

It was kind of dark at the bottom of the pond. I looked up to find out what happened to the sun. I saw a big blob. It was Algae! She was blocking the **sunlight**.

I looked around and there were no plants growing in Algae's shadow. Speck said this was because plants need sunlight to grow.

Speck and I floated up to ask Algae about what was going on. She said she didn't mean to block the sunlight. Algae knew that plants growing on the pond's bottom needed it. But there are a lot of nutrients in the water, and they made her grow very big.

Algae said that the best way to help her not grow so much was to keep nutrients from coming into water.

In my next column, Algae will tell us how to do that!

### PUZZLE TIME

Find the hidden words.

N U T H C G L E S R R V N S B  
 J I N D V Z F U T U E E Z L H  
 C G T E A G L A R N Z T U C P  
 T Y E R P O N D L S I F A L O  
 A R Y S O Y Q U T Z L C A W R  
 K U K X U G F N Z C I N A Y D  
 G S A C K R E I A X T P U B Y  
 P H V C Z I O N C S R E G S H  
 T X E W R Z H H I O E I F U C  
 Z P X T D K U P P B F B W N D  
 S C U H F N B G X S U H N L E  
 B N Y P O L L U T I O N Z I F  
 A Y N Z P Y L S N C I H B G I  
 D C L N V L J B P E H B P H K  
 L R T Z F G Q A I J Z A L T A

ALGAE  
 FERTILIZER  
 HYDRO  
 NITROGEN  
 NUTRIENTS  
 PHOSPHORUS  
 PLANTS  
 POLLUTION  
 POND  
 SPECK  
 SUNLIGHT  
 WATER

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Visit Our Web Site

[http://indian.ifas.ufl.edu/waterquality/water\\_quality.htm](http://indian.ifas.ufl.edu/waterquality/water_quality.htm)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Date/Time	Event	Location
April 14	Hibiscus Festival	Downtown Vero Beach
April 20 8:30am-12:30pm	Limited Certification Training (license renewal only)	IRC Extension Office <i>Pre-registration required*</i>
April 21 10am-3pm	Earth Day Celebration	Riverview Park, Sebastian
April 21 12pm-6pm	Earth Day Celebration	Riverside Park (Under the Oaks), Vero Beach
April 28 10am-11:30am	Rain Barrel Workshop	IRC Extension Office <i>Pre-registration required*</i>
May 4 8:30am-12:30pm	Aquatic Pest Control Training	IRC Extension Office <i>Pre-registration required*</i>
June 29 9am-4pm	Limited Certification Training (new license only)	IRC Extension Office <i>Pre-registration required*</i>



The enclosed material is provided as one of the many services to the educational programs offered by this agency. Our statewide network of faculty is prepared to provide current information on food, agriculture, marine, and natural resource science, energy, nutrition, family and 4-H youth, community development, and related fields. We will be happy to help you with additional information upon request.

*Janet Bargar*

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**\*To pre-register for classes and workshops, please call (772) 770-5030.**

*St. Lucie County Extension is also offering pesticide applicator training classes. Call (772) 462-1660 for more information.*

If you have any questions about the upcoming events or anything in this newsletter, please contact Janet Bargar at the University of Florida/IFAS Indian River County Extension Service.