



# How to Talk to Your Landscaper About Your Lawn

*Long Island's landscaping professionals share our concern for the protection of our water. After all, they live here too!*

Most landscaping companies on Long Island know how to maintain your lawn without using potentially harmful products, but in a competitive market they feel obligated to make every lawn look as green and perfect as possible. Often, they use high-nitrogen, water soluble fertilizers to give lawns a "quick green-up" in the spring, and toxic chemical pesticides to kill weeds and other pests.

**But your landscaper works for you.** The fact is you can have a beautiful lawn that is completely safe for children and pets, and protective of our environment and our water at the same time. Here's exactly what to tell your landscaper:

- 1. Please do not use any "Weed and Feed" product on my lawn.** These products typically contain 25-30% water soluble nitrogen, and a pesticide (herbicide) called 2,4-D, one of two ingredients contained in the infamous Vietnam War defoliant Agent Orange.
- 2. Please use a natural, slow release fertilizer with less than 12% nitrogen.** Fertilizers used on Long Island should contain mostly *water insoluble nitrogen*. If your landscaper says those products aren't available, point them to our web page - [LIWater.org/fertilizer](http://LIWater.org/fertilizer).
- 3. Please do not use any pesticides on my lawn.** Instead, ask them to aerate and over-seed, and apply compost top dress or compost tea.

## *en español*

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- 1. Por favor no utilice ningún producto Weed and Feed en mi césped.** Estos productos contienen cantidades altas de nitrógeno y pesticidas que contaminan nuestras fuentes de agua.
- 2. Por favor utilice un abono de liberación lenta que contenga menos del 12% en nitrógeno.** Para obtener una lista de productos disponibles, por favor visite [liwater.org/fertilizer](http://liwater.org/fertilizer).
- 3. Por favor no utilice ningún pesticida en mi césped. Airee y tire extra semilla, y abone la superficie con compost (abono orgánico) o té de compost sobre el césped.**