



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 high-nitrogen fertilizers or chemical pesticides, 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 strong chemical pesticides to kill weeds and other pests.

But your landscaper works for you. The fact is you can have a beautiful, lush lawn, make it completely safe for children and pets, and protect 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 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 which lists more than 16 manufacturers including some (e.g., North Country Organics and Renaissance) which sell directly to the trade.
- 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.

If your landscaper seems reluctant or unsure about your request, please ask them to visit the **GrassrootsInfo.org/organiclawns**. We have trained more than a thousand lawn professionals in the science of natural lawn care, and we will be happy to help them.

en español

- 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 **grassrootsinfo.org/organiclawns**.
- 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.**