

# PERFECT LAWNS HAVE A PRICE



- Pesticides end up in our drinking water and rivers.
- Pesticides end up on our skin and in the air we breathe.
- Pesticides have been linked to asthma, cancer, nerve damage and birth defects.
- Pesticides expose pets to poison.

## Children are especially vulnerable to pesticides

The National Academy of Sciences reports that children are more susceptible to chemicals than adults and estimates that 50% of lifetime pesticide exposure occurs during the first five years of life.

The Environmental Protection Agency concurs that children take in more pesticides relative to body weight than adults and have developing organ systems that are more vulnerable and less able to detoxify toxic chemicals. Adverse effects of pesticide exposure range from mild symptoms of dizziness and nausea to serious, long-term neurological, developmental and reproductive disorders.

## Alternatives to Pesticides

1. *Weed manually.* Use boiling water, diluted soap or white vinegar to kill weeds. Apply corn gluten to discourage weeds.
2. *Develop Healthy Soil.* Leave mulched grass clippings to recycle nitrogen. Reduce soil compaction – aerate soil to allow air to circulate around grass roots.
3. *Reduce Thatch.* Rake the layer of decomposing roots, leaves and stems at the surface of the soil.
4. *Choose Native Grass types* suited to your climate and soil.
5. *Water Deeply* but not too often.
6. *Mow High, Not Low (3 inches).* Taller grass chokes out weeds; longer grass takes in more sun and moisture.
7. *Use Fertilizers Wisely.* Choose natural organic fertilizers, use sparingly in early spring or late fall. Avoid application prior to expected heavy rainfall to prevent runoff into waterways.

