



NEWS RELEASE

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BREVARD SUMMER FERTILIZER BAN BEGINS JUNE 1, 2020

Brevard County FL – Monday, June 1, begins a ban of fertilizers throughout Brevard County and its cities, a measure designed to prevent more pollutants from entering the Indian River Lagoon. The ordinance applies to all homeowners, residents and commercial businesses that apply fertilizer. The ban lasts four months, until the end of September.

During the summer rainy season, fertilizer on grass, turf and lawns washes into streets and drains, making its way to the Indian River Lagoon and other waterways. The nutrients in fertilizer (nitrogen and phosphorus) can lead to algae blooms and poor water quality. Major algae blooms block the sun, which can cause the death of seagrass, plants, fish and other animals, as happened in 2011 and 2016.

Before the regulation was passed in 2013 more than 127,000 pounds of Nitrogen and 12,000 pounds of Phosphorous nutrients entered Brevard's waters each year. With the regulations in 2014, Nitrogen dropped by 36% and Phosphorous by 74%.

While local regulations prohibit the application of fertilizers, the state allows stores to sell the product. All stores are required to post signs reminding shoppers not to fertilize during the summer "black out" and to remind them about the types of fertilizers allowed in Brevard from October through April.

Some area retailers like ACE Hardware stores in Titusville, have taken the fertilizer off their shelves during this period. ACE Owner Bill Pastermack says, "It's the right thing to do. I've lived here since 1964 and want our kids and grandkids to enjoy the lagoon like we did."

During the remainder of the year, from October 1 to May 31, the ordinance specifies that only fertilizers with zero Phosphorous, and at least 50% slow release Nitrogen are allowed in Brevard. There are also restrictions from fertilizing within 15-25 feet of water bodies, with the exact distance specified by the city or county.

Residents need to be aware that reclaimed water that comes from those purple pipes contains a lot of these nutrients; its use should be limited. Watering lawns with reclaimed water after fertilizing is like doubling the amount of nutrients, which is harmful to our local waters.

The ordinance also requires:

1. Spreader deflector shields are required when fertilizing via rotary (broadcast) spreaders. Deflectors must be positioned such that fertilizer granules are deflected away from all impervious surfaces, fertilizer-free zones, surface waters and water bodies, including wetlands.
2. Fertilizer shall not be applied, spilled, or otherwise deposited on any impervious surfaces.
3. Any fertilizer applied, spilled, or deposited, either intentionally or accidentally, on any impervious surface shall be immediately and completely removed to the greatest extent practicable and either legally applied to turf or any other legal site, or returned to the original or other appropriate container.

4. In no case shall fertilizer be washed, swept, or blown off impervious surfaces into stormwater drains, ditches, conveyances, or water bodies.
5. In no case shall grass clippings, vegetative material, and/or vegetative debris be washed, swept, or blown off into surface waters, stormwater drains, ditches, wetlands, sidewalks or roads.

Below is the link to the Brevard County ordinance:

<https://www.brevardfl.gov//docs/default-source/natural-resources-documents/fertilizerordinancefinal.pdf>

Here is a link to a new Fertilizer Ban video produced by the Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition.

<https://vimeo.com/419743603/adcf8043c9>

A copy of the required sign is attached.

The Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition is a leading, independent advocate for a healthy Lagoon. The non-profit, non-partisan Coalition brings together organizations, businesses and individuals who share the goal of supporting restoration of the Lagoon.

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