

- Keep rodent pests out of your yard by tightly closing trash pails and cleaning up food waste.

Building Partnerships

The Landscaping Initiative serves as a vehicle to bring various collaborative partnership efforts together to solve environmental problems through environmental stewardship. These partnerships are forged with the understanding that while many programs have a specific focus (i.e., pesticide risk-reduction, water pollution, air pollution, etc.), they all are interconnected. Some of our partners include:

- The Lawns and the Environment Initiative
- The Environmental Institute for Golf
- EPA's GreenScapes
- USDA's Regional Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Centers

Working with its partners, EPA has helped produce the following guidance documents:

- *Environmental Guidelines for Responsible Lawn Care and Landscaping*
- *Ten Guiding Principles for Responsible Lawn Care and Landscaping*
- *Environmental Principles for Golf Courses in the United States*
- *Healthy Lawn, Healthy Environment: Caring for Your Lawn in an Environmentally Friendly Way*



Rain gardens capture rainwater, thereby reducing stormwater runoff and conserving natural resources.

Ten Guiding Principles for Responsible Lawn Care and Landscaping

1. Learn about your site or yard
2. Choose the right plant for the right spot
3. Build healthy soil and use fertilizers responsibly
4. Reduce waste and recycle nutrients
5. Attract and protect wildlife
6. Manage yard pests responsibly
7. Use water wisely
8. Mow and prune responsibly
9. Prevent landscape pollution
10. Reduce storm water runoff

For more information on sustainable lawn care and landscaping practices, EPA's Landscaping Initiative, or on partnering with the Initiative, visit:



www.epa.gov/pestwise/landscaping



Landscapes help shape the environmental quality of urban and suburban areas. These landscapes are living ecosystems in a network of impervious surfaces (e.g., buildings, driveways, roads, and parking lots). Landscaping practices impact homeowners, golf courses, rights-of-way, roadways, parks, and public spaces. They affect local environments and human health through the use of:

- Water for irrigation,
- Fertilizers for improving soil conditions, and
- Pesticides for controlling weeds, insects, and fungal diseases.

The Landscaping Initiative

The Landscaping Initiative is a collaborative partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and various businesses, lawn care professionals, government agencies, and community organizations. The Initiative seeks to enhance the environmental, human health, and economic benefits associated with landscapes while reducing the need for pesticides, fertilizers, irrigation, and energy inputs by working in concert with nature.



Why Are Landscapes Valuable?

While landscapes add important aesthetic value to our communities, they also provide essential environmental, human health, social, and economic benefits.

Environmental Benefits

- Protected water quality
- Reduced heat buildup
- Reduced noise and glare
- Reduced soil erosion
- Improved air quality
- Conserved natural resources
- Sequestered carbon

Human Health and Social Benefits

- Increased community appeal
- Enhanced community gathering places
- Increased opportunities for physical activity and exercise
- Reduced stress

Economic Benefits

- Increased property value
- Increased worker productivity and job satisfaction
- Renewed business districts and urban areas

Pesticide Issues Associated with Landscaping

High Pesticide Concentrations in Urban Areas

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) water quality monitoring data indicate higher concentrations of pesticides in urban and suburban areas when compared to agricultural areas.

Limited Consumer Knowledge

Inadequate consumer knowledge can result in poor landscaping practices—such as plant selection,



irrigation, mowing, use (or lack of use) of fertilizer/soil amendments, aeration, and pest management—and improper pesticide use. Consumers often neglect the instructions on pesticide labels or fail to read the labels altogether, which can lead to:

- Applying more than the recommended dose of a pesticide,
- Treating symptoms of pest problems without suitable information about the causes, and
- Improper storage and disposal of pesticides.

Public Health Pests

Landscapes can be habitats for public health pests such as ticks, mosquitoes, rats, and mice. The following steps can help prevent these pests from finding a home in your yard:

- Stop ticks from transmitting serious diseases such as Lyme disease by mowing lawns, removing leaf litter and brush, creating a barrier between lawns and wooded areas with wood chips or gravel, and controlling for deer and mice.
- Prevent mosquitoes from breeding by not allowing standing water in places like garbage pails, roof gutters, drainage pipes, and bird baths.