

**Show Your
support for a
STRONG
fertilizer
ordinance**

by attending the

**Lee
County
Commission
Meeting
December 4th,
2007
5:00 PM**

Old Lee County Courthouse
2120 Main Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901

**Please email the Lee
County Commissioners**
Ask them to support a
strong common sense
fertilizer ordinance

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**Speak Up For a Healthy
Gulf Coast**

Please call Sierra Club Regional
Community Organizer Marti Daltry
at **239-425-3466** or email her at
marti.daltry@sierraclub.org to find
out how you can help today

**You can HELP
Turn
the Tide!**



**Your support and
attendance
are needed
on
December 4th,
2007**

Recent peer reviewed and published scientific research points to an **emerging link between man-made pollution, and the increasing intensity and duration of various types of toxic and nuisance algae blooms**, such as **red tide and red drift algae** in our coastal areas and **blue green algae** in our lakes, rivers and streams.

One source of that pollution is the **improper and excessive use of fertilizers in residential areas.**

According to the state of Florida, the residential (non-farm) consumption of fertilizers in Lee County **5,238 tons in 1998 to 20,420 tons in 2006. An increase of 15,182 tons or almost 300%.** This massive increase in the use of fertilizer on urban and suburban landscapes represents a clear threat to our water quality.

Fertilizers have three main ingredients nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. These are indicated on fertilizer packaging as numbers, (i.e. **15-5-5**). The first two numbers in that sequence indicate the percentage of nitrogen and phosphorus that are in each bag.

The focus of this common sense initiative is to **reduce the improper and excessive use of fertilizer by all residents**, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, **in order to protect our precious water resources.**

**LEE COUNTY ORDINANCE
REGULATING THE IMPROPER AND
EXCESSIVE USE OF FERTILIZERS
ON AGENDA FOR
NOVEMBER 13TH MEETING OF
THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION**

What are some of the provisions in the current ordinance that need to be strengthened and/or changed?

- Extend the restricted period for the application of fertilizers containing nitrogen and/or phosphorus to include the month of June. **June 1 through September 30**
- Make the ordinance applicable to non-professional applicators in addition to professional and institutional. **All fertilizer applicators should be regulated** – public and private, commercial and non-commercial.
- Require that fertilizers applied to landscapes contain **no less than 50% slow release nitrogen.**
- Extend the fertilizer free buffer zone adjacent to water bodies to a **minimum of 25 feet.**

- Require use of deflector shields on all broadcast fertilizer spreaders. Deflector shield requirement must be independent of the depth of buffer/fertilizer-free zones.
- **Include a six (6) foot “Low Maintenance Zone”** rather than a “no mow zone”. This should be recommended and strongly encouraged in the ordinance.
- Include a section on public education in the ordinance that focuses on increasing community outreach, improving retail signage, and promoting the natural Florida landscape.
- Eliminate the Damaged Turf and/or Landscape Plants exemption in the ordinance.

A strong Landscape and Fertilizer Management Practices Ordinance will be a meaningful step in the right direction and these recommendations will help ensure the efficacy and viability of this new ordinance. Improving landscape and fertilizer management practices is a common sense way to protect the health and future of our county’s citizens, environment and economy.