



What's the concern with fertilizers?

Fertilizers commonly used in garden and lawn applications contain nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus that help plants grow. During heavy rains these nutrients can wash into nearby streams and lakes.

While nitrogen and phosphorus are essential for plants to grow, too much can cause excess growth of algae and other aquatic plant life in local water bodies (such as Hollister Lake). When these nutrients overload a local water body, Harmful Algal Blooms (or HABs) may occur. These blooms may be recognized by bright green streaks or an appearance of pea soup on the water surface.

HABs and excessive aquatic plant growth are an indication that a water body may be going through a process called *eutrophication*. This process can lead to reduced aquatic habitats, plant and fish die offs, and ultimately deteriorated water quality. Water bodies that are impacted by eutrophication place a greater strain on the systems that treat our shared drinking water resources.

Caption: Photos showing harmful algal blooms (HAB)
Credit: NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation



Why am I receiving this brochure?

You are receiving this brochure because you live or own property within the Hollister Lake Watershed.

As part of the DWSP2 Plan, the Village of Athens is encouraging watershed residents to use best management practices (BMPs) for lawn and garden activities, and septic system operation and maintenance. Using these tried and true practices will help to prevent potential contaminants from impacting the Village water supply and also protect your own drinking water well.



Questions?

Conservation Advisory Council
c/o Athens Village Clerk
Clerk@AthensVillageNY.gov
(518) 945-1551

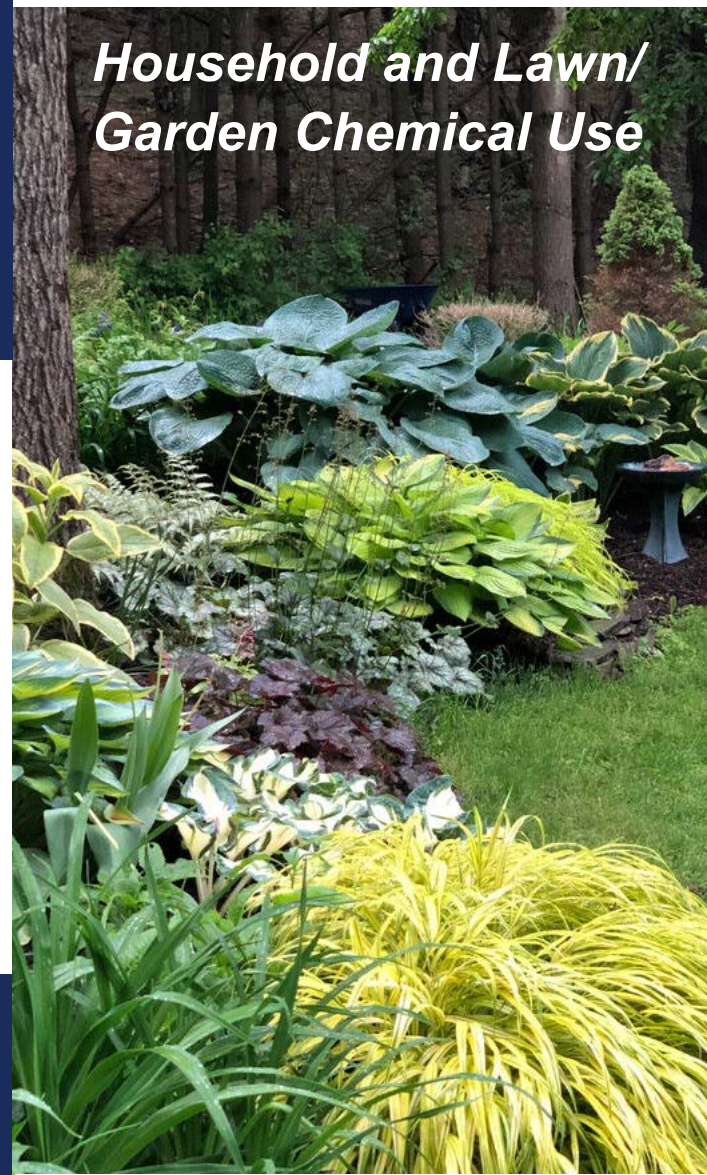
Cover photo: Shade garden of Shelley Haefner in Old Chatham, NY.
Credit: Shelley Haefner, finegardening.com

To view the full DWSP2 plan document and digital versions of all three brochures, use this QR code by pointing your smartphone's camera at the box to the right.



How can you protect your drinking water?

Household and Lawn/ Garden Chemical Use



Hollister Lake Watershed Guides



Household & Automotive

Many household chemicals such as solvents, drain cleaners, oils, paints, pharmaceuticals, and pesticides can interfere with the proper operation of septic systems and can also lead to contamination of local water resources, including potentially your own well. Avoid disposing of these chemicals in the kitchen or bathroom sink, toilet, bathtub/shower, or in the trash:

- bleach
- paint
- paint thinner
- strong acids
- strong bases
- ammonia
- antifreeze
- motor oil
- automotive fluids
- pharmaceuticals

If you are unsure of whether a particular chemical can be disposed of in a household drain, check the product label. If there is a warning about proper disposal, then it should not go down the drain. In addition, be sure to keep old oil tanks, leaky vehicles, lawn care and other noxious chemicals properly stored and ensure they are not leaking into the ground.

Many counties offer services to dispose of household chemicals appropriately. Greene County periodically offers Household Hazardous Waste Collection days, when the county will accept many chemicals in limited quantities. For more information on Greene County services visit www.greenegovernment.com.



Garden & Landscaping

Choices made about the care and maintenance of your garden, lawn and landscaping have the potential to impact drinking water quality. Here are a few ways that you can protect our shared drinking water resources:

- ✓ Consider landscaping with native plants, grasses, and flowers. Doing so can help reduce or eliminate the need for lawn chemicals altogether.
- ✓ Plant trees the appropriate distance from your septic system drainfield to keep roots from growing into your septic system. A septic service professional can advise you on the proper distance, depending on your septic tank and surrounding landscape.
- ✓ Reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides and concentrate their use only to the specific areas of concern.
- ✗ Never park or drive on your septic system drainfield.
- ✓ Use mulch or compost on slopes to control erosion.
- ✗ Do not blow, sweep, hose, or rake leaves in the street, gutter, or storm drain.



Pesticide, Fertilizer & Herbicide Use

When lawn care chemicals are over applied or stored where they can leak into the soil or run off the land surface, water quality is put under threat. Both wells pulling from groundwater and Hollister Lake from surface water runoff can become contaminated when chemicals are disposed of improperly.

- ✓ Use eco-friendly pesticides easily found at garden stores -- such as diatomaceous earth, neem oil, and insecticidal soap.
- ✗ Limit use of glyphosate-based herbicides such as RoundUp.
- ✓ Fertilizers applied to paved areas should be cleaned up immediately to reduce runoff.
- ✓ Read manufacturer labels and follow all directions.
- ✓ Fertilizing from May to June and September to October are the best times to get a green lawn and minimize pollution.
- ✓ Store pesticides and herbicides in a covered area. Dispose of leaking containers and outdated or banned products according to local regulations.
- ✗ Never apply or use lawn chemicals or fertilizers if a heavy rain or wind event is expected, and only apply them when the vegetation needs it.

