

Fertilize Wisely to Help Improve Water Quality

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Most of the discussion about the pollutants in the water that surrounds the Refuge focuses on the role of big agricultural companies and large ranches. Whereas they are major contributors to the pollution of our waters, they are not the only contributors. We all contribute. So, while we need to continue our work to reduce the pollutants from big agricultural companies and ranches, we also need to increase our focus on reducing the pollutants that each of us contribute to our environment.

We should adhere to the best practices that the City of Sanibel established in its [2007 fertilizer ordinance](#)

Make sure that you, your landscaper, and your home or condo owners association's service firm follow city recommendations. [A number of local communities](#) have similar ordinances in effect. If you live somewhere that does not have a fertilizer ordinance, you can also work with your community to create one.

In December 2018, a [bill](#) was filed with the Florida legislature that would fund environmental restoration projects and would fine wastewater treatment facilities that spill raw or partially treated sewage into our water. The bill also cracks down on the residential use of lawn fertilizers. We will be following this bill closely and will keep you apprised of its progress.