



Wall Township Clean Water and Lawn Conservation Program

To All Wall Township Residents:

The Wall Township Environmental Advisory Committee is providing you with an opportunity to earn a Certificate of Appreciation by downloading this document which has a checklist of things that you can do to protect our ecosystem by becoming environmentally conscious. You can enhance the natural resources in Wall Township by using “best” practices in landscaping, by planting native trees and shrubs, and by being involved in education concerning day-to-day activities.

If you have specific questions about the checklist, view the items below for more thorough explanations. **Once you have completed the checklist, bring it to the Clerk’s Office in the Wall Municipal Building and you will be awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for your accomplishments and you will be recognized as a conservation-friendly resident.**

To be recognized as conservation-friendly resident, your score must be at least 20.

1 Point Each

Water Quality Protection and Water Conservation

- I direct my gutters away from pavement and onto the grass (or vegetated area).
 - Allowing rainwater to flow onto vegetated areas promotes infiltration and groundwater recharge which replenishes underground aquifers used for drinking water.
- I have not increased impervious (non porous) surfaces on my property or I limit rainwater runoff.
 - Impervious surfaces limit rainwater infiltration into the ground and accelerate runoff further deteriorating surface water quality. Limiting rainwater runoff can be done in a variety of ways such as placing flower planters over decks and patios.
- I water my plants/lawn less often but for longer duration (to allow 1 inch applications) or I do not water unless necessary.
 - Conserving water protects drinking water aquifers and reduces impacts from polluted runoff.
- I water during early morning hours or do not water at all.
 - This water conservation measure minimizes evaporation loss.
- I hand water or use drip irrigation rather than spraying sprinklers.
 - Drip irrigation conserves water by providing water directly to the plant root system where it is needed the most.

- I have spray/shut-off nozzles attached to watering hoses.
 - This is a water conservation measure that prevents the loss of precious drinking water supplies.
- I do not “wash” sidewalks or the driveway.
 - You can accomplish the same thing with a broom and without wasting water.

Green-friendly Landscaping

- I minimize lawn areas (naturalized areas are created or groundcovers used).
 - Lawns require extensive maintenance such as regular cutting, weeding, and pest control. These maintenance activities typically require chemicals that harm the environment like gasoline, herbicides, fertilizers, and pesticides.
- I maintain a mowing height at 2-3 inches (or highest possible setting on my mower).
 - Allowing your grass to grow to this height will reduce watering needs and help control weed growth.
- I plant groundcovers (or other vegetation) or use mulch to cover exposed soil areas.
 - Groundcovers typically require less maintenance and help reduce incidents of erosion.
- I place a maximum of 2-3 inches of mulch around trees, shrubs, and garden beds.
 - Mulch will protect your planting beds from weeds and reduce the need for watering.
- I group my plants according to their water needs.
 - By grouping plants with similar watering needs, you can reduce your maintenance requirements and provide water only to those plants that need it most.
- I plant with native plants when creating new areas or replacing existing areas.
 - Native plants are desirable for many reasons. Native plants require less water and maintenance, are more tolerant to infestation problems, provide an important food source and habitat for native wildlife, and are equally attractive when compared to non-native species. A list of native plants is provided on this website.
- I remove invasive plants where possible.
 - Invasive plants are typically plants that will “overrun” and out compete other plants creating a monoculture that provides less value to the dynamic needs of wildlife.
- I leave dead trees and brush or at least a few branches, where possible, to provide a food source and habitat for wildlife.
 - Dead trees attract organisms that help with the decomposition of the tree. These organisms consume the tree and become a food source for other animals. Brush provides a similar value and also provides safe habitat for wildlife.
- I have a pond(s) and/or bird bath(s) on the property.
 - Ponds and bird baths provide drinking water for a variety of animals.

Limiting Fertilizer and Pesticide Use

- I use slow release/organic fertilizers in compliance with the New Jersey Fertilizer Law based on results from a soil test.
 - Many lawn care enthusiasts automatically apply fertilizer to their lawns without knowing if it is necessary. Soil tests determine the need for nutrients and soil alkalinity balance. Excessive nutrients are not consumed by plant material and runoff into local waterways causing harm to aquatic organisms.

- I keep excess fertilizer and debris off of driveway/sidewalks and out of storm drains.
 - Fertilizer and yard waste such as lawn clippings that are placed on driveways or sidewalks can easily find their way into nearby storm drains. Storm drains are direct conduits to nearby waterways that do not provide any water treatment capabilities. When this material reaches the stream, the decaying process consumes oxygen in the water and stresses aquatic organisms.

- I use compost or grass clippings as a lawn/garden amendment.
 - Grass clippings are capable of serving as a natural fertilizer by returning nutrients back into the soil.

- I can identify 5 beneficial insects in my lawn/garden.
 - Expanding your knowledge about lawn and garden care will make you a better steward of our waterways. Some examples of beneficial insects are ladybugs, preying mantis, and bees.

- I minimize my pesticide use, pesticides used are low toxicity or organic (pesticides include both herbicides and insecticides), or pesticides are not used at all.
 - Minimizing your use of pesticides or using low toxicity pesticides will reduce the environmental impact of these chemicals, reduce the need for production of harsh chemicals, and reduce the need for disposal of hazardous wastes.

- I spot spray pesticides/chemicals (ex: only affected plants or lawn areas are treated instead of spraying the whole lawn) or use no pesticides.
 - Spot spraying of chemicals reduces the overall consumption and need for harmful chemicals and the need for the disposal of a hazardous waste.

- I apply an integrated approach for controlling unwanted insects, weeds, animals, (pulling weeds, spray pests off plants with water, naturally occurring parasites and predators, barrier fences).
 - Integrated Pest Management is a technique that minimizes the use of harsh chemicals and takes advantage of the natural cycle of predation by the use of bugs and insects that consume others. For example, ladybugs are consumers of mites and also serve as a food source for many types of birds.

- I tolerate some pests (insects and weeds) in my lawn/garden.
 - It's easy to spot lawn and garden enthusiasts who are dependent upon high volumes of fertilizers and herbicides. Their lawns are deep forest green in color and have that weed free carpet appearance. From their point of view, they have the perfect lawn. What they may not realize is their lawn is probably having a detrimental effect on our waterways and aquatic life.

Good Samaritan

- I pick up and dispose of my pet feces.
 - Many of our waterways are contaminated by bacteria from animal feces. Sources include pets, wildlife and human waste. Human waste reaches our waterways from failing sewer lines, failing septic systems, and boater dumping of head waste.

- I minimize my winter salt use, salt is not used at all, or alternatives are used.
 - Winter salts have a detrimental impact to aquatic life when washed into local streams.

- I dispose of household chemicals properly.
 - Most household cleaners are considered to be hazardous wastes. If the warning label on the container has a danger warning, then chances are it is classified as a hazardous waste. The Household Hazardous Waste Facility is located on Shafto Road, Route 547, Tinton Falls, New Jersey.

- I called the local Master Gardeners as a resource regarding one of my lawn/garden related questions.
 - Educating ourselves about lawn and garden care will ensure we are minimizing our impact on the environment. Master Gardeners have a wealth of information that can teach us to be better stewards of our environment. Contact them at <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/mastergardeners/> to learn what you can do.

- I gathered information from another source such as a garden center, magazines, or local cooperative extension to answer one of my lawn/garden related questions.
 - Learning about gardening is fun. Obtain gardening tips to learn what you can do to minimize your impact on the environment.

- I attended at least one educational class or hike on a landscape related topic.
 - Learning about our natural environment is fun and fulfilling. Understand our relationship with the land will help us become better stewards of the environment.

- I communicated my efforts with neighbors, friends, relatives, or other local group.
 - Sharing what we have learned about environmental protection helps spread the word about its importance and provides tips to friends and neighbors about what they can do to improve local conditions.

Bonus (2 points each)

- I have installed dry well(s) or rain barrel(s) on building downspout(s) or have created a rain garden.
 - Capturing rainwater for reuse or allowing it to filter into the soil is important for aquifer recharge, groundwater movement and stream health. Dry wells and rain gardens allow rainwater to filter into the soil as it once did before development and the proliferation of impervious surfaces such as roadways, parking lots and rooftops. Rain gardens are low lying areas in your yard complimented by flower gardens where rainwater can easily filter into the soil. Dry wells are underground concrete containers placed under rooftop downspouts that temporarily store rainwater and slowly release the water back into the soil.

- I have a bird and/or bat house installed.
 - Providing resting places for wildlife is important as their habitat diminishes. Bat houses are particularly important since bats can consume 500-1,000 mosquitoes an hour.

- I have plants that provide a food source for wildlife.
 - Plants that provide food for wildlife are important as their natural habitat diminishes.

- I live along a waterway or water resource and maintain a naturally vegetated buffer along its edge.
 - The last line of defense for capturing polluted runoff is the area adjacent to a stream or wetland. Landowners can provide additional polishing and filtering just before rainwater runoff reaches a waterway or a water resource.

- I live on a wooded lot and do not have a lawn.
 - Forests provide the greatest level of protection for our waterways. Trees and their complex root systems capture and filter rainwater before it reaches underground aquifers or our waterways. Also, forested areas do not require the same level of harmful chemicals for their maintenance when compared to lawns.

MY TOTAL SCORE (add up all of your checkmarks)

Target Score = 20

To be recognized as conservation-friendly, your score must be at least 20.

Reminder: Drop off this checklist at the Clerk’s Office in the Wall Municipal Building to be recognized as “Conservation-friendly” and pick up your Certificate of Appreciation.

Thank you for your participation.

Name of Resident

Date

Address

E-mail Address

Telephone or Cell