



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

April 16, 2013

### **Protecting our Environment**

*A properly maintained lawn provides immense benefits to urban water quality*

**MILTON**, Ont. — As part of an ongoing effort to maintain the overwhelming positive environmental impact of landscaping, Landscape Ontario members have vastly limited their use of phosphorous in their fertilizer blends for many years.

Landscape Ontario members are stewards of the environment and again have been leading the way for many years by educating and demonstrating to others proper and safe use of fertilizer nutrients near waterways. Recent news reports have highlighted the damage phosphorous can cause to the Great Lakes, with runoff feeding algae blooms that kill aquatic wildlife.

However, while phosphorous is an essential nutrient for all plant growth, adequate phosphorous is already present in the soil and therefore is rarely used by professionals on home lawns. Landscape Ontario has directed that it should only be used in circumstances where deficiencies exist, or when establishing a new stand of turf.

“Our members have been very proactive in limiting the use of phosphorous in their lawn fertilizer mixes,” says Denis Flanagan, Public Relations Director of Landscape Ontario. “The professional lawn care industry has made significant strides in improving the quality of fertilizer used on lawns, including the use of ultra slow release Nitrogen. Advancements in slow release technology now allow professional lawn care providers to apply lower rates of fertilizer, yet still maintain excellent plant health.”

Turfgrasses in lawns, golf courses, parks and sports fields provide measurable carbon sequestration as well as being major producers of oxygen for our environment. Continual improvements in seed technology are allowing professional lawn care companies and their customers to maintain good colour and health while using substantially less water and chemicals.

A recent comprehensive literature review completed by Dr. Chris Murray at Lakehead University has shown that healthy turfgrass, properly maintained, is a significant benefit to urban water quality. The prudent use of fertilizer, correctly applied at the appropriate time has a measurably positive effect on limiting runoff in the urban environment.

A lush, green lawn has extensive environmental benefits. Did you know:

- That 2500 square feet of turfgrass produces enough oxygen for a family of four?
- That North American lawns store billions of tonnes of carbon, making grass a leading contributor to offset carbon and reduce global warming?
- That the average lawn in front of a home has a cooling effect of 8.5 tonnes of air conditioning? Lawns will be 18°C (30°F) cooler than asphalt and 7°C (14°F) cooler than bare soil in the heat of summer.
- Turf improves water quality by storing and filtering the water that would otherwise go into catch basins and flow into our natural water sources?
- A 10,000 square foot lawn will contain six grass plants per square inch, 850 grass plants per square foot and 8.5 million grass plants total? Think of your lawn as a forest of grass plants.

For more information, please visit [www.landscapeontario.com](http://www.landscapeontario.com). Follow Landscape Ontario on Twitter [@Green\\_for\\_Life](https://twitter.com/Green_for_Life), Like it on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/LandscapeOntario) and connect with it on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/landscapeontario).

#### **About LandscapeOntario:**

Landscape Ontario is one of the most vibrant associations of its kind, comprised of more than 2,000 members, 10 sector groups and nine local chapters. Its trade mission is to promote the horticulture industry in Ontario, and its public mission is to promote the joys and benefits of green spaces.

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For more information, please call

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