

The Resource

A Publication of the City of North Augusta
Stormwater Management Department

Consider Stormwater While Gardening this Summer



The sun has warmed the soil and summer vegetable and flower gardens are beginning to appear throughout the community. The new floral displays are revitalizing the City from a long winter and the vibrant activities of nature are all around us. With this bustle of activity, we would like to remind residents that over application of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides are key sources of pollution in

North Augusta streams. As rain washes across your yard, most of the chemicals that you have recently applied will flow down the storm drain into streams and the river. Safely and efficiently using chemicals in your landscape protects your yard and the streams, creeks, and downstream ponds where small frogs like the Southern Cricket Frog call home (see the Species Profile).

To help citizens learn about properly using chemicals in the landscape, the Stormwater Management Department sponsored two workshops in March presented by Aiken Clemson Extension Agent, Ms. Suzanne Holmes. The first

workshop trained attendees how to successfully control pests in the home landscape. The purpose of the second workshop was to teach participants how to create successful flower beds through proper planning, preparation, and maintenance. Learning how to garden effectively and to control pests efficiently can save time, money, and protects the environment. Some of the lessons covered at the workshop are presented below to provide information so that you can become part of the effort to protect North Augusta's streams.

Pest Management Around Your Home:

A key strategy for pest management is to use the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) technique. IPM is a decision making process that anticipates and prevents pest activity or infestation by combining a number of methods to achieve long-term solutions to pest problems. One component of IPM is to solve pest problems in the least toxic manner possible. It does not mean totally switching from chemical to organic pesticides nor does it mean eliminating chemicals altogether. It simply means to use various combinations of pest control methods, biological, cultural, and chemical in a compatible manner.



IPM has five basic components:

1. **Pest Monitoring** - keep an eye out for signs of pest activity such as; molds, mildew & fungi on your plants, dead spots in your lawn, mole/vole tunnels, aphids, scale damage, leaf galls, nematode damage, etc. Check your entire yard for signs of infestations at least twice a year. Learn what insects are beneficial to your yard at: <http://entweb.clemson.edu/cuentres/csheets/index.htm>.
2. **Pest Identification** - identify the pest prior to application of control chemicals. Do NOT just spray or apply any chemical to control an unknown pest. Doing so can end up killing all of the beneficial insects in your landscape. Call the county extension agent at 803-649-6297, for help identifying the pest and to gain advice to control the problem or visit the Clemson Web at: <http://entweb.clemson.edu/>.
3. **Determination of economic injury level** - determine if it is cheaper to remove, destroy, and replace the damaged plants instead of trying to control the problem with pesticides. It is sometimes cheaper to replace the plants and start preventive measures to eliminate re-infestation.
4. **Pest Control Strategies** - there are numerous methods to control many situations including using non-chemical methods, biological control, providing proper nutrition to plants, using soap washes, pest control oils, specific pesticides, implementing preventive measures, or using a combination of all of these methods.
5. **Utilize Resistant Plant Varieties** - many landscape and garden plants are cultivated to be resistant to disease and pests, check plant tags, seed packs, or Consult the Home & Garden Information Center at <http://hgic.clemson.edu>.



Preventive IPM strategies

- Reduce moisture in and around your home and keep it in good repair to prevent termite and other pest infestations
- Keep your lawn healthy, grow pest-resistant varieties in your gardens
- Remove pet food from outdoors overnight to keep cockroaches, skunks, opossums, raccoons or rats from invading
- Weed around your garden and your home to remove cover for insect or animal pests
- Water your lawn and gardens in the morning instead of the evening to reduce turf and plant diseases. Properly water your plants, do not cause stress by over/under watering.
- Learn more about plant selection as a natural method of preventing infestations. Talk to your nursery about types of plants that don't have pest problems and consider using them in your landscape. Visit the Clemson HGIC website listed above.

Source: Pest Management in the Home Landscape Handout - Clemson Extension Fact sheets

Species Profile

Cricket Frogs

The Southern Cricket Frog (*Acris gryllus*) and Northern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*) can be heard calling day and night around the city. Their call “click-click-click-click” sounds like small stones or marbles tapping together in a steady rhythm. These two frogs have distinct ranges that actually overlap in this area. Southern Cricket frogs are the most common frogs below the fall line in coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia. Northern Cricket Frogs are usually found above the fall line. Since we are so close to the fall line, we may find both species here. Although the cricket frogs are in the Treefrog Family (*Hylidae*), they live on the ground. Unlike other treefrogs, they do not have toe discs (used for sticking to smooth surfaces).

Look for cricket frogs in North Augusta near the margins of swampy areas, ponds, streams, potholes, bays, and wet roadside ditches. These tiny frogs eat small insects like mosquitoes. They prefer sunny wetlands with lots of vegetation to hide and look for food. The



Photo: J. D. Wilson, SREL

A Southern Cricket Frog

cricket frog is a small one-half to one inch long creature with a distinctive triangle behind its pointed head. They also have a “Y” pattern running down their back. Cricket frogs bumpy skin may be shades of brown or gray, a variation of brown and bright green, yellow or even red. Southern cricket frogs are more slender and have longer hind legs than Northern.

If you walk up to the edge of a sunny pond and see a very small quick leaping

frog hurrying for cover, it is most likely a cricket frog. If you remain still for a moment, listen, watch, and pay very close attention, you may spot it again. Look for the triangle and “Y” shape to be sure. Luckily for us, the frogs are very common and keeping their habitat free of pollution will ensure that these small creatures will stay healthy and thrive in our area. To learn more about the cricket frogs, visit our website at www.northaugusta.net.

Mark Your Calendars!

Fourth Annual Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day

May 20 - 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The City of North Augusta Stormwater Management Department will hold its fourth annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event on Saturday, May 20, 2006 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Crossroads market (Kroger) Shopping Center. The event is designed to help residents properly dispose of unwanted and potentially hazardous materials such as engine fluids, paints and stains, herbicides, pesticides, cleaning solvents and the like. Participation at the 2005 collection event removed over 7,000 pounds of hazardous materials from homes and sheds. Don't miss this opportunity to properly dispose of your unwanted materials and potential pollutants!

Yards & Gardens Workshop - August 24

If you missed the March workshops, another Yards and Garden workshop will be held on Thursday, August 24, 2006. Suzanne will return and present one class at two different times: a daytime session (2-4 p.m.) and an evening class (6-8 p.m.). You can email us to let us know you want to attend either the morning or evening class with your name, address, phone, and number attending to: stormwater@northaugusta.net.



Upcoming Low Impact Development Workshop

Class for Developers, Design Engineers, and Contractors:

A Low Impact Development Workshop luncheon will be held Friday, July 14, 2006 from 12:00 to 1:30 at the North Augusta Community Center. Low Impact Development (LID) is a comprehensive engineering design modeled after natural processes. The goal of LID is to maintain and enhance the pre-development hydrologic regimes of urban and developing watersheds. Learn about water quality best management practices that are required for projects in North Augusta. For more information please contact the Stormwater Management Department at stormwater@northaugusta.net or 803-441-4246.



For additional information contact:

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