

Does your lawn care professional BayScope?

BayScaping: Tips for green yards to keep Casco Bay blue

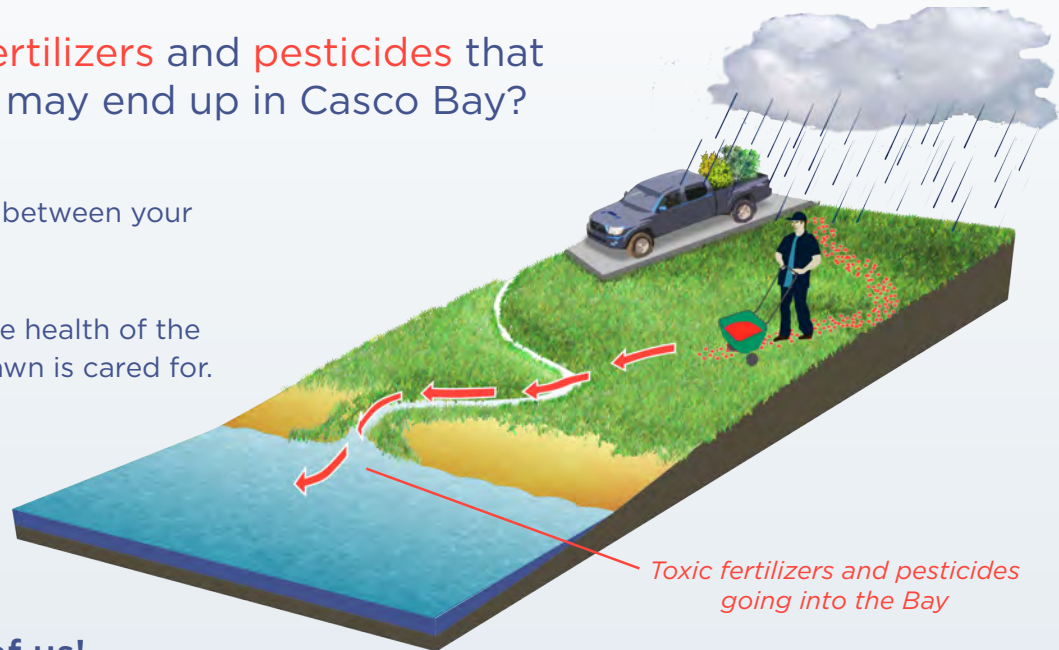


We improve and protect the
environmental health of Casco Bay

Did you know that the **fertilizers** and **pesticides** that are applied to your lawn may end up in Casco Bay?

BayScaping makes the connection between your backyard and Casco Bay.

You can have a **direct impact** on the health of the Bay today by changing how your lawn is cared for.



Casco Bay belongs to all of us!

Ten questions you should ask your lawn care professional *before you hire!*

- 1. Do you follow a fixed timetable for applying pesticides and fertilizers, including Weed'n'Feed products?**
If the answer is Yes, stop the interview and keep looking!
- 2. Will you give me advice on mowing, watering, aeration, and seeding?**
- 3. Do you mow the grass to 3½ - 4 inches in height and leave the clippings?**
- 4. Do you try to mow when the lawn is dry?**
This makes for a cleaner cut.
- 5. How often do you sharpen your mower blades?**
Many professionals sharpen their mower blades daily!
- 6. Do you practice Integrated Pest Management or follow the Maine Board of Pesticides Control's Best Management Practices?**
If the landscaper doesn't know about the Board of Pesticides Control, which certifies landscapers who apply pesticides, direct them to www.state.me.us/agriculture/pesticides.
- 7. If you detect a problem that requires the use of pesticides, do you (1) spot treat pests or (2) treat the whole lawn?**
The correct answer is 1!
- 8. Do you do a soil test before applying fertilizer?**
- 9. What do you use for fertilizer?**
Preferably use one without phosphorus, with slow-release nitrogen and with potassium only when needed.
- 10. Will you provide me with a written contract that spells out a description of services for a fixed period of time?**

Why should you be concerned?

Pesticides can harm aquatic animals (as well as children and pets)! When Friends of Casco Bay tested rainwater running into Casco Bay, we found pesticides at thirteen coastal sites (see map below), some in amounts that the EPA has determined **can harm fish and other aquatic life**.

Nitrogen, one of the three components of **fertilizer**, can trigger **algae blooms** that coat coastal coves in **ugly green slime**. When these green plants die, decomposition sucks life-giving oxygen from the seawater. This process also releases carbon dioxide, creating acidic conditions that make it harder for **clams and mussels** to build and maintain their shells. Friends of Casco Bay has found excess nitrogen at most of the coastal sites it has tested.

An algae bloom smothers a mudflat in Casco Bay.



Friends of Casco Bay has detected pesticides in stormwater running into Casco Bay.



The right landscaper will reduce your need for pesticides and fertilizers and in the long run, save you time, save you money, save your lawn, and save Casco Bay!

You can find a list of Sustainable Landscapers certified by the Maine Landscape & Nursery Association at melna.org.

Learn more at Friends of Casco Bay's website: cascobay.org/bayscaping

