

Soil Testing in Cuyahoga County – Be a Soil Steward!

The Cuyahoga SWCD has some great resources to help you go green in your own backyard this year. Look for our articles, workshops and presentations on how you can help get conservation on the ground in your own backyard!

SOIL TESTING

Before you apply any fertilizer to your lawn this spring, consider getting your soil tested.

Soil testing only costs \$20!

How do you soil test?

Getting a good representative sample is very important for obtaining a meaningful soil test report. Only 2 cups of soil is needed. Collect a few grab samples from different areas of your lawn and garden (anywhere from 0-6" deep) and combine these into one plastic sandwich bag. Drop off soil sample with your name, address, phone number and payment to:



**Cuyahoga County
Water Quality Lab
6100 West Canal Road
Valley View, OH 44125
(North Door)**

For further information, contact Suzanne Britt at 216/443-8278 or by email at sbritt@cuyahogacounty.us

Why Soil Test?

- **Saves money!** Choose specific amounts of fertilizers without wasting fertilizer or money.
- **Diagnoses** whether there is too little or too much of an analyzed nutrient.
- **Encourages** proper plant nutrition by providing the appropriate lime and fertilizer recommendations.
- **Promotes environmental stewardship.** When applying only as much fertilizer as is necessary, nutrient loading into surface and ground water is minimized and natural resources are conserved.

Soil testing analyses the amount of the following in your soil: Phosphorous, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, pH, Cation exchange capacity, Base saturation. Also provided: Lime requirement and fertility recommendations.

Why is excess phosphorus such a big deal in the waters of Cuyahoga County?

Phosphorous is naturally occurring element, but a little goes a long way. One pound of phosphorous can stimulate the growth of 500 pounds of algae! As algae and other aquatic plants flourish, they decompose and as they break down, they choke oxygen out of the water. With low dissolved oxygen levels, fish and other aquatic animals are left "gasping for breath." High soil phosphorus combined with surface runoff and accelerated erosion can cause excessive growth of plants and algae in surface waters, damaging aquatic ecosystems.

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