

Preventing Phosphorus Pollution

A Guide for Municipal Boards and Maintenance Staff in Pound Ridge, NY

Protecting Our Waterways Starts with Daily Operations

Phosphorus runoff is a key source of water pollution in the Croton Reservoir Watershed. Municipal maintenance crews play a vital frontline role in reducing this impact. Through careful attention to storm drains, roadside debris, landscaping, and public property upkeep, you help prevent phosphorus from reaching our streams, ponds, and reservoirs.

What Maintenance Crews Can Do

1. Keep Streets and Storm Drains Clean

- Sweep roads regularly to remove debris, leaves, and sediment before it washes into storm drains.
- Clear leaves and trash from catch basins, especially before storms.
- Report any signs of illegal dumping or clogged storm drains.

2. Use Phosphorus-Free Products on Town Grounds

- Only use fertilizers marked as phosphorus-free unless instructed otherwise based on soil testing.
- Avoid spreading fertilizer near storm drains, wetlands, or waterways.
- Stick to proper application rates—more isn't better.

3. Support Septic System Function on Public Sites

- Monitor septic tanks on public facilities for leaks or odors.
- Schedule regular pump-outs and inspections.
- Report any signs of malfunction to supervisors promptly.

4. Manage Soil and Erosion During Work

- Use hay bales, silt fences, or mulch to prevent exposed soil from washing into drains.
- Stabilize disturbed areas quickly—especially near slopes or water bodies.

5. Maintain Equipment with Care

- Prevent fluid leaks from trucks and landscaping equipment.
- Store materials like salt, fertilizer, or chemicals in covered, dry areas.
- Clean equipment in designated wash areas, never near storm drains.

Additional Resources

- Westchester County Dept. of Health: health.westchestergov.com
- Pound Ridge Town Code (Septic & Stormwater): ecode360.com/8164753
- NYS DEC Phosphorus Lawn Care Guidelines: dec.ny.gov

Stay Informed and Make an Impact

- Ask questions if you're unsure about a product or practice.
- Share this information with coworkers.
- Report any maintenance challenges that could affect water quality to your supervisor.
- From clearing drains to mowing parks, every task contributes to water quality. With your help, Pound Ridge can continue to lead in keeping our environment clean and our water safe.