



PEOPLE  POLLINATORS
ACTION NETWORK

MORE PLAY LESS SPRAY

**Create vibrant and beneficial green spaces
while protecting your health!**

Managing parks, playgrounds, and yards with organic and non-toxic methods (instead of synthetic fertilizers and weed-and-feed products) is *essential* to protect your health, health of your family, your pets, and Colorado's biodiversity.

Did you know?

Many common pesticides used to manage school grounds, parks, and yards are linked to **weakened immune systems, autism, asthma, congenital & learning disabilities, reproductive dysfunction, diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and cancers.**



Children are particularly sensitive to pesticide exposure due to their smaller and developing bodies. Other vulnerable populations like the elderly, low-income and historically marginalized communities also face an increased risk



Pets, too, are vulnerable to pesticide exposure. Lawn chemicals have been linked to two types of canine cancers, and can contribute to seizures, rashes, skin allergies, and in some cases, death. Pet poisonings from flea-and-tick collars are not uncommon!



Widespread pesticide use impacts birds too! The US and Canada have suffered a 29% decline in bird populations, largely due to expanding cropland and the use of pesticide-coated seeds, which can be eaten by birds or the insects that birds consume.



Systemic pesticides in the pollen and nectar of flowers can harm pollinators years after application, and have been linked to massive losses of bees and butterflies. Round-up® is lethal to beneficial insects. Water-soluble pesticides can leach into soil threatening ground-nesting insects and beneficial organisms.



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SWITCHING TO ORGANIC IS
EASIER THAN YOU THINK! SIMPLY:

- 1) **Avoid pesticides** (including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides) and seek out non-chemical alternatives.
- 2) **Convert part or all of your lawn to a pollinator-friendly pocket prairie** of local grasses and wildflowers.
- 3) **Incorporate wildflowers** that bloom throughout the seasons (spring, summer, fall) and include native plants to support the widest array of native pollinators.

STEPS TO CREATING A HEALTHY LAWN:

Test the soil

Soil health is an essential component to creating a healthy lawn or garden. An ideal pH level assures that your grass can properly absorb nutrients. Contact CSU Extension to test your soil!

Aerate

Compacted soil is ripe for weed growth. Aerate your lawn to allow for air, water, and nutrients to penetrate more deeply into the root zone.

Apply Compost

Once you've determined your soil needs, you can add the appropriate nutrients (like nitrogen, potassium, and magnesium) to encourage good growth and root development. Do this by leaving grass clippings on your lawn, adding organic compost and/or applying slow-release organic fertilizers.

Over-seed

Over-seeding your lawn with regionally and site appropriate and high quality seed promotes a dense turf that can out-compete weeds.

Mow High & Mow Less Often

Proper watering and mowing high strengthens turf and encourages deeper, drought-resistant root systems. If you can tolerate some beneficial weeds in your yard like clover and dandelions, mow every other week rather than weekly, to provide an early season food source for pollinators.

Water Wisely

Generally, lawns should be kept at 3-3 1/2 inches while watering deeply once a week should be sufficient.

OVERALL BENEFITS OF GOING ORGANIC

In the long term, going organic will actually cost you less to maintain your lawn. Also, it will allow beneficial insects to thrive and help with pest control. In doing so, your yard will become a beautiful and thriving ecosystem for people, pets, and pollinators!



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