

PHOSPHORUS AND COAL TAR ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

PHOSPHORUS ~ If you decide to fertilize your yard this year, avoid phosphorus or use only the amount your soil can absorb. Certain manufactured fertilizer compounds contain phosphorus that can enter our ponds, rivers and groundwater. Any phosphorus run-off results in excessive algae and aquatic plant growth. This reduces available oxygen for fish and other aquatic organisms. Phosphorus in groundwater also contaminates our drinking water.

Soil test kits may be obtained from the University of Illinois Extension, 1102 McConnell Road, Woodstock, IL 60098, phone (815)338-3737. A \$15 testing fee applies to all soil samples analyzed. Please follow instructions and avoid run-off by using only the amount necessary. Start with smaller amounts and gauge effectiveness before you use more. Many organic fertilizer products are also available. The internet is a valuable tool to gain additional information and locate these products.

COAL TAR ~ If you decide to sealcoat your asphalt driveway this year, there are a few things you should know. Seal coating makes old asphalt look new and protects its surface. However, studies by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) raise concerns about the chemicals used in various products.

Sealcoat comes in three basic varieties including: coal tar-based, coal tar/asphalt mix, and asphalt-based. The coal tar varieties are more resilient, but contain higher levels of a class of chemicals called PAH's (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) that enter our waterways, harm fish, and with prolonged exposure, pose a risk of cancer in humans. Because of the environmental problems associated with PAH's. A number of cities have banned the use of coal tar-based sealcoat in their jurisdictions (asphalt-based sealcoat may still be used).

The Village of Fox River Grove strongly encourages residents to study product labels carefully and insist on a coal tar free product for do-it-yourself and contractor seal coating.