

## MANTOLOKING ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 2012



Winter

*Spring is rapidly approaching, and the Mantoloking Environmental Commission would like to share some environmental tips which can be easily implemented to improve our local environment, and further our commitment as a community to a “Greener” planet.*

**The Application of Fertilizer:** On January 5, 2011, Governor Chris Christie signed into law the most restrictive fertilizer content standards in the nation for nitrogen and phosphorus. The law also requires specific fertilizer application practices which are *effective immediately*. These standards and practices will help reduce pollution from nutrients in all of New Jersey’s waters.

Specifically, the law decreases the *total* amount of nitrogen in fertilizer and *increases* the amount of *slow release* nitrogen to 20 percent. An overabundance of nitrogen, however, not only can harm lawns, but when washed into our waterways, stimulates excessive algae and weed growth.

Residents and Professionals need to be aware of the following:

- Fertilizer may not be applied from November 15 through March 1 by residential consumers and from December 1 through March 1 by professionals.
- Application of fertilizer is restricted during winter months when the ground is frozen and not able to be absorbed allowing it to be washed away when it rains. Fertilizer application is prohibited during – or just before – heavy rainfall, and on impervious ground.
- Fertilizer containing phosphorus or nitrogen can not be applied within 25 feet of any water body except when applied with a drop spreader or targeted spray – then the buffer may be reduced to 10 feet.
- Effective **January 5, 2012**, all professional applicators will be required to undergo training and become certified through the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers University.
- *We encourage homeowners to team up with landscapers to discuss ways to help save our waterways and to follow this environmental law.*

**Animal Waste on our Beaches:** In an effort to reduce the amount of dog waste left on our beaches, the MEC has sent a letter to the Mayor and Council requesting that dog waste stations be installed along with signs at key beach entrances. Each dog waste station will contain biodegradable dog waste bags that should be used by all pet owners accessing the beach front. The new signs will also include a reminder that picking up after their pets is an existing Borough Ordinance.

**Dune Vegetation:** Mantoloking’s dune system is a vital defense system on our eastern boundary to protect against the ocean and the forces of nature. All dune systems are dynamic and alive and require sustained maintenance and upkeep. A critical component to a successful and healthy dune system is the plant life that exists on a dune. The Mantoloking Environmental Commission is excited to present a seminar titled “Dune Vegetation” on Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 pm at the

Mantoloking Borough Hall. The key note speaker will be Dr. Louise Wootton, a Professor of Biology and Director of Sustainability from Georgian Court College. Dr. Wootton is a recognized dune vegetation expert, specializing in dealing with invasive species which can damage or eliminate native plant life. She will be discussing how to identify and eliminate invasive species, and the best practices to build a sustainable, resilient community of non-invasive, native plants on the dune. Additional information on this seminar will be provided via a town-wide mailing later this spring and also on the Mantoloking web site@ [www.mantolokingborough.org](http://www.mantolokingborough.org).

**Please Keep off the Dunes:** During the winter months, some Borough beach entrances have clearly been roped off after sustaining storm damage from Hurricane Irene. Residents and visitors continue to go around the ropes to access the beaches and walk over the dunes. Beach front home owners can help by installing “Keep of the Dunes” signs which are available through the Borough and can be picked up at the Department of Public Works garage during normal business hours.

**A Safer Way to Kill Weeds:** Some over the counter herbicides (weed killers) allegedly contain carcinogens. To prevent these chemicals from entering our groundwater, the drainage systems and eventually the Bay, we recommend trying a natural or organic formula. For driveway or walkway weeds, try putting vinegar in a spray bottle and spray directly onto the weed. This is not recommended for lawns. For more information, check out [http://landscaping.about.com/od/weedsdiseases/qt/vinegar\\_weeds.htm](http://landscaping.about.com/od/weedsdiseases/qt/vinegar_weeds.htm)

**Consider Composting!** Did you know that the average American discards 4.5 lbs of trash per day? Paper products alone make up 30% of our waste, and yard debris and food waste comprise an estimated 23 % of our garbage, according to Ocean County Department of Solid Waste. All of these materials are easily compostable. With the right balance of carbon materials (dry materials) and nitrogen (wet materials), you can use your compost to promote healthy plant growth and weed control in your gardens. Also, composting food scraps instead of putting them down the garbage disposal eases the organic loading on the local sewage treatment plant which helps to improve the plants biological treatment system. For more information and simple techniques on composting, please contact [emack1115@aol.com](mailto:emack1115@aol.com).



### **Spring Beach Sweep!**

The spring beach sweep sponsored by [Clean Ocean Action](http://www.cleanoceanaction.org) is scheduled for Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012 from 09:00 – 12:30. The Mantoloking beach sweep site is at the east-end of Downer Avenue with a secondary site at Williams Place (South Beach). All residents wishing to participate in this event should check-in with the Captains of the Beach Sweep, Jane & Lance White (Downer) or Courtney & Kathleen Bixby (South Beach). For more information visit the Clean Ocean Action web site at [www.cleanoceanaction.org](http://www.cleanoceanaction.org) or contact Courtney Bixby at [cbbixby@comcast.net](mailto:cbbixby@comcast.net).