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Green algae as a result of phosphorus runoff in Lake Champlain. Courtesy of Chantal d'Auteuil, Missisquoi Bay Basin Corporation.

IS YOURS...

GBIC seeks a thriving Lake Champlain region with an economic environment providing meaningful employment consistent with an uncompromised natural environment, enabling present and future generations of Vermonters to live, learn, work and play in the Champlain Valley.

The mission of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce is to promote and support the healthy environment that makes the Lake Champlain Region and Vermont the ideal place to live, work and do business.

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) is a federal, state, provincial (Quebec) and local initiative to restore and protect Lake Champlain and its surrounding watershed for future generations.



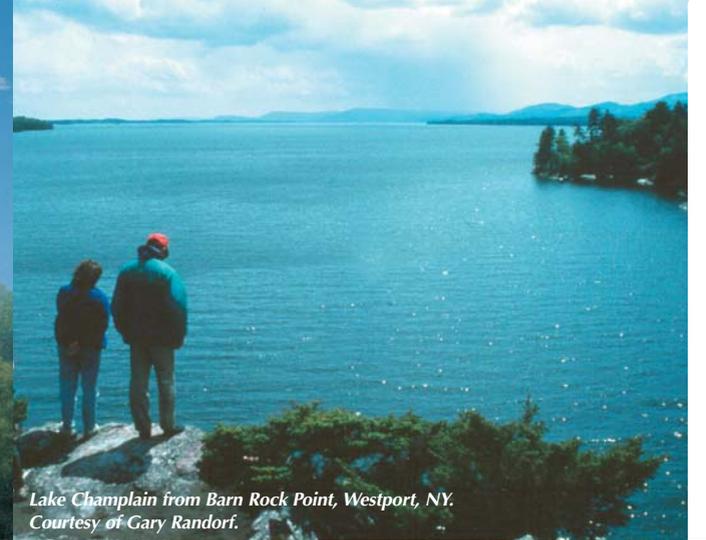
YOUR LAWN YOUR LAKE...

Produced in partnership by:
Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)
(www.vermont.org/gbic)
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
(www.vermont.org)
Lake Champlain Basin Program
(www.lcbp.org)

 Printed on recycled paper with soy-base ink.
Photo: Perennial garden fertilized with compost, courtesy of Windekind Farm.

*How To Keep Them Both
Healthy And Beautiful*

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Lake Champlain from Barn Rock Point, Westport, NY. Courtesy of Gary Randorf.

THE CHOICE

A Collaborative Effort To Help Reduce Phosphorus Runoff Into Lake Champlain While Encouraging Economic Activity

The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC), the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Lake Champlain Basin Program have combined efforts to educate both residential and commercial lawn care owners on ways that they can help reduce phosphorus runoff into Lake Champlain. Phosphorus is a nutrient, essential for human, animal and plant growth. When too much phosphorus gets into nearby waterways, however, the nutrient provides a key source of food for microscopic plants or algae. Algal blooms can deter swimmers and recreational boaters from full enjoyment of the lake and its amenities, which restricts the recreational use of the lake. The blooms may also negatively affect property values and alter aquatic habitat, and in extreme cases, they produce toxins that can be dangerous to human health.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!



View of Lake Champlain and the "Palisades" from Vergennes, VT. Courtesy of the VT Department of Tourism and Marketing.

Whenever possible, please try to do your part by following these 10 simple guidelines!

1) Conduct soil testing before any products are applied. Maybe your lawn or garden doesn't require fertilizer, or perhaps needs less phosphorus. Not all fertilizer has the same amount of phosphorus. It makes good sense to get some information before you apply any fertilizer.

2) Recycle the nutrients in your own grass clippings first, to help mulch your lawn. As lawn clippings compost in the grass, they will release the nutrients that they stored. This should also cut down on weed growth and the need for herbicides and pesticides. A dethatching or mulching mower will assist your lawn maintenance.

3) Reduce the size of your lawn mowed area if appropriate. Planting more trees, shrubs or other perennials may reduce the need for fertilizers, and save on mowing expenses over time.

4) Create your own compost whenever possible. This will help cut your costs and reduce the amount of phosphorus entering the watershed over time. You can add kitchen compost to lawn clippings using a compost bin, or buy compost or fertilizer products from area businesses.



A landscape fertilized exclusively with compost. Courtesy of Steven Wisbaum, Champlain Valley Compost Company.

5) Avoid planting non-native invasive species to your lawn. It is important to resist planting any invasive species—like purple loosestrife or other illegal species—that tend to spread aggressively and choke out native plants.



Purple Loosestrife. Courtesy of the VT Department of Environmental Conservation.

6) Leave vegetation in place, especially the areas close to rivers, streams or small trickling brooks. This water flows to Lake Champlain. If you can leave native vegetation in place, its roots will hold the soil better and less soil will wash downstream, thus preventing phosphorus from being carried downstream. In many communities it is illegal to cut or remove vegetation from riparian areas near rivers and streams or the lake.

7) Sweep or hose loose soil, and especially any loose fertilizer after an application, from driveways or side-

walks back onto the lawn so that it will become incorporated into the turf. This will help reduce the nutrients and sediments of surface runoff that will otherwise flow down through the drainage systems and into a stream or a storm drain, and into the Lake.

8) Read fertilizer application directions very carefully. More is not usually better. More may actually be harmful, both to your property and to downstream water quality as it runs off your property.

9) Consult with those who might know more. Extension Services, Garden Centers, Garden Clubs, landscaping companies all can offer you expert assistance with soil testing, planting advice and assistance; visit www.lcbp.org for suggestions!

10) Make a pledge never to dump any products down nearby storm drains. Storm drains divert water to nearby waterbodies, the lake itself or to the wastewater treatment plant.



Storm drain with a message: "Don't Dump." Courtesy of Joel Flewelling, Ghostwriters Communications.

Thank you for doing your part to keep Lake Champlain clean—for all of us and our future!