



### **Keeping your backyard healthy is like issuing Mother Nature Insurance**

Lawns, gardens, shrubs and trees produce oxygen and clean the air by absorbing pollutants. They also help to prevent erosion by holding soil in place and allowing rain to soak in. Trees, shrubs and lawns keep water clean by filtering pollutants out of runoff from roads and parking lots. Healthy yards are particularly important to urban areas because they absorb rain that recharges groundwater. By keeping your outside environment healthy, you are helping Mother Nature keep our air and water clean.



Washington Friends of Farms & Forests (WFFF) is a non-profit association serving as a resource and advocate for crop protection issues. WFFF represents individuals, organizations, and businesses involved in the production and/or protection of food and fiber.

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## **Washington Friends of Farms & Forests**

### **Backyard Benefits**



**Maintaining a healthy outside environment**





## Backyard Benefits



### **A healthy yard adds quality to your life**

Studies show that trees and lawns lower stress levels in people who view them. Whether walking through a park, or working in your yard, healthy trees and lawns bring benefits to everyone.

Lawns, gardens, shrubs and trees work hard for us by producing oxygen and absorbing pollutants like dust and car exhaust. The healthier the plant, the harder they work.

### **For a healthy yard, first think prevention**

Common sense and nature make it difficult for pests to survive in your backyard. Begin working toward a healthy yard by first eliminating potential problems. Prune dead and diseased limbs off of trees, shrubs and plants. Rake up fallen leaves and discard fallen fruit. Use mulch, it not only helps to control weeds, it also maintains an even soil temperature and helps the soil retain moisture.

When you first notice pesky bugs on your plants, shrubs or trees, try washing them off with water, or spray with an insecticidal soap. If this does not meet your needs, you may consider using a pest control product.

### **What to do when more pest control is needed**

If you find that you need to use pest control products, choose the product that best targets the problem.

When buying pest control products, be sure that you have properly diagnosed the problem. Talk to a qualified nurseryman or County Extension Agent. Read the label before making your purchase to be sure you have the right product for the job. Always use the product according to label directions, and, remember, using more than recommended is not better.

Measure the area you are treating, and mix only as much as you need. Never let pest control products get on sidewalks or driveways or near storm drains or ditches where they

could be washed into streams. Never dump leftover products down any type of drain, spray it out onto grass. If you have any questions or concerns about using pesticides in your yard, call a licensed applicator.

### **Healthy plants resist pests better than weak plants**

Taking proper care of all of your outdoor plants will reduce your need for pest control products because healthy plants resist pests better than weak plants.

### **Other Backyard rewards**

A healthy yard is like putting money in the bank. It can increase your property value as much as 15 percent! A healthy yard can save you money. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30 percent and can save 20-50 percent in energy used for heating."

