



NEWS RELEASE

City of Austin PO Box 1088 Austin, Texas 78767

For Immediate Release

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WAGE WAR ON WEEDS, NOT WATER!

Over 45,000 pounds of atrazine, a weed killing chemical, are sold each year in Austin in the very popular weed and feed lawn care products. The highly mobile chemical is not just staying on our lawns, but is also traveling to our creeks and groundwater. Atrazine is showing up frequently at more than 50% of our surface water monitoring sites and 70% of the groundwater monitoring sites city-wide. It has also been detected in 86% of the samples from Barton Springs pool.

While the levels of the chemical detected are fortunately still low, the City of Austin and the Texas Cooperative Extension are launching a new educational program to keep Austin's water clean. Through Grow Green, their earth-wise landscaping program, they are asking homeowners city-wide to take action now and avoid using weed and feed products.

Weed and feeds combine both fertilizer and weed killer and are not environmentally-sound for several reasons. First, the best time to fertilize is NOT the best time to use an herbicide. Equally important is the fact that broadcasting a weed killer is considered excessive in most cases. Any chemical that is not absorbed by the targeted weed stays unused on the turf where it can wash off during rain to Austin's creeks or filter into our groundwater supply. The weed killing chemical can also find its way indoors on shoes and hands.

You can help protect water quality by purchasing a straight fertilizer (organics are a good alternative) and then hand-pulling or spot-treating weeds instead. If you use a lawn care professional for yard maintenance, please ask them to treat weed problems only when they are visible and then make sure the chemical isn't over-applied. For a complete list of good fertilizing and weed killing tips, visit the Grow Green display at your local nursery or home improvement center or at www.growgreen.org.

With a little help from you, we can help protect our water one yard at a time.



grow green
earth-wise choices for Austin area landscapes