

News Release – For Immediate Release
June 3, 2014
City of Sanibel
Contact - Natural Resources Department (239) 472-3700

DON'T FEED THE MONSTER!

Applications of Fertilizer Containing Nitrogen and Phosphorus Prohibited from
July 1-September 30

The City of Sanibel would like to remind all citizens, landscape and pest control professionals that frequent and unpredictable summer downpours increase the opportunities for nutrient run-off to enter our local waters. By not applying fertilizers containing nitrogen and phosphorus during the summer months, you can be part of the City's on-going effort to minimize local and regional nutrient pollution.

(INSERT SLIME MONSTER PSA)

FROM JULY 1ST THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30TH, IT IS A VIOLATION OF CITY ORDINANCE 07-003 TO APPLY FERTILIZERS CONTAINING NITROGEN AND/OR PHOSPHORUS TO LAWNS OR LANDSCAPE PLANTS. Applications of these nutrients, where needed, may resume on October 1 in accordance with the City's fertilizer regulations adopted by City Council in 2007.

For lawns and landscape plants that may need summer nutrients beyond those available in the soil, consider the following:

- Be Wise if You Fertilize! Prior to July 1, a fertilizer containing at least 50% Slow Release Nitrogen (SRN) may be applied at a rate not to exceed 1 lb. nitrogen/1000 sq. ft. As the name indicates, SRN is released slowly over time and will be available for uptake by plants all summer long.
- Nitrogen is responsible for plant *growth*. To achieve a "green-up" without unwanted growth, a micronutrient fertilizer containing iron may be used.
- When you mow, leave the grass clippings on your lawn. As the clippings break down, the nutrients will be recycled back to your lawn.
- Most Sanibel soils have enough naturally occurring phosphorus to support healthy plants. Unless a soil test indicates otherwise, save money and choose "no phosphorus" products year-round.

Because of the potentially severe impacts to water quality resulting from the misapplication of fertilizer during the summer months, City Code Enforcement, Natural Resources, and Police staff are intensifying efforts to ensure compliance with the City's fertilizer regulations. Staff will be conducting frequent island-wide patrols for violators, including both citizen "do it-yourself" applicators and professionals.

If using a professional fertilizer applicator, it is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that the applicator has a City of Sanibel fertilizer applicator's endorsement (license). A

list of City-licensed fertilizer applicators can be found on the City's website at <http://mysanibel.com/Departments/Building/Licensed-Contractors>. Click on the "list of local licensed contractors". Licensed fertilizer applicators can be found at the end of the list (arranged alphabetically) under license class "Vegetation & Fertilizer" or "Fertilizer only".

For more information regarding appropriate fertilizer use on Sanibel, visit the City's fertilizer website at <http://www.sanibelh2omatters.com/Sanibel-s-Fertilizer-Information> or contact the Natural Resources Department at (239) 472-3700. You can also learn more about what's at stake by visiting <http://fertilizesmart.com/>.

Violation of or refusal to comply with Sanibel's fertilizer laws is considered a 2nd degree misdemeanor. Upon conviction, punishment shall include a fine up to \$500 or imprisonment up to 60 days in jail, or both. To report violations of the Sanibel Fertilizer Ordinance, please contact the Sanibel Police Department at (239) 472-3111.