



Bernards Township Environmental Commission



To: The Citizens of Bernards Township, NJ
From: The Bernards Township Environmental Commission
Date: December 19, 2011
Re: Resolution #080520, “2008 Pesticide Management System Resolution”

Bernards Township is proud to care for its municipal and school lawns, sports fields, and parks without the use of synthetic chemical lawn care pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. The Township Committee memorialized this policy with the 12/23/08 signing of Resolution #080520, “*2008 Pesticide Management System Resolution*”¹, which was subsequently endorsed by the Board of Health and the Board of Education.

In addition to managing Township lawns in a manner which prioritizes children’s health & safety under the precautionary principal coupled with positive environmental stewardship, the intent of the Township is also to lead citizens by example in the care of their own lawns. The Resolution therefore explicitly states that “*the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Bernards encourage all citizens to make every effort to participate in this endeavor on their own property*”.

By encouraging participation on private property, the Township - in its actions and through the supporting Resolution - is advising and recommending that citizens cease using such pesticides and synthetic fertilizer on their own lawns. Encouraging, advising, and recommending are synonymous in this regard and are all meant to clearly express the voluntary nature of the Resolution’s participation by our citizenry. The Township’s actions in communicating this recommended course of action to citizens go beyond just the Resolution’s words alone, and include coordinated efforts illustrated by the following outreach:

- Available consultations and advice from Department of Public Works personnel
- The Environmental Commission’s table at Charter Day including lawn care handouts
- A resource-rich lawn care web site
- Park signage
- Collaboration with the Bernards Township School District including the Environmental Commission’s sponsorship of the *2011 Organic Lawn Care Poster Contest* and collaboration on a related curriculum module
- Environmental Commission presentations and consultations with home owner associations and home owners
- Written and oral testimonies from Township Committee and Board of Education leadership in support of related statewide legislative efforts
- Coordination of Resolutions and policies among the Township, Board of Health, and Board of Education
- Encouragement of citizen and home owner association attendance at a talk held at Dunham Park by the President of Safelawns.org

¹ <http://www.bernards.org/Township%20Committee/Document/IntegratedPestManagementSystem08-12-31.pdf>



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- Encouragement of citizen and home owner association attendance at NOFA-NJ organic lawn care training seminars held at Duke Farms

In addition to this discussion of the Township's advocacy efforts pertaining to private property lawn care, it should also be highlighted that compliance with the Resolution, while voluntary, cannot be achieved nor properly claimed merely by reducing such pesticides or synthetic fertilizers and continuing with a similar lawn care program at reduced application amounts. The Resolution states that pesticides shall not be applied "*as a matter of routine*". Pesticides are allowed under the Resolution, however, when used as a "*control method of last resort*" after exhausting other means (discussed in the Resolution), and this is the context in which allowable "reductions" are contemplated by the Resolution. Of note, the Township has not found a need to use any such pesticides or synthetic fertilizer in the management of its lawn care program since adopting the Resolution. Organizations utilizing pesticides and synthetic fertilizer as a matter of routine in their lawn care program are not within the letter or the spirit of the Resolution. Private organizations and citizens wishing to make statements as to their compliance with the Resolution are encouraged to have their lawn care program's specifications reviewed by the Environmental Commission in advance.

Please find important resources related to managing your lawn without pesticides and synthetic fertilizers on the Bernards.org website by following this path:

Bernards.org > [Boards and Commissions](#) > [Environmental Commission](#) > [Organic Lawn Care](#)