



MARINE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
TOWN OF FALMOUTH  
180 SCRANTON AVENUE, FALMOUTH, MA 02540  
TEL: (508) 457-2550 • FAX: (508) 457-2525  
TOWN MARINA TEL: (508) 457-2551

May, 2016

Dear Falmouth Homeowner:

You are receiving this letter because all or part of your property is within 100' of a coastal pond.

The Town of Falmouth is home to more than fifteen major coastal ponds. From Waquoit Bay to Little Pond to Megansett Harbor, these estuaries define our community. And, they are in serious decline. Too much nitrogen going through the groundwater into these water bodies is causing algae blooms, fish kills, and habitat degradation.

Individual cesspools and septic systems are the largest single cause of this decline. But the second largest controllable nitrogen source impacting our estuaries is the **fertilizer used on lawns**. That is why Falmouth has enacted the Nitrogen Control Bylaw, Chapter 237 of the town code. The full text of the Nitrogen Control Bylaw (Chapter 237 of the Town Code) can be found online at: <http://ecode360.com/27443489>.

If you fertilize your lawn, or hire a landscaper to do so, this bylaw applies to you. If any portion of your property comes to **within 100 feet of a protected resource area** listed in Falmouth Wetlands Regulations 10.02 (1) (a-d) including any: bank, freshwater wetland, coastal wetland, beach, dune, flat, marsh, swamp, wet meadow, bog, vernal pool, reservoir, creek, estuary, stream, pond, lake, the ocean or land under water bodies, **the Bylaw bans ANY fertilizing in these areas**. The Department of Marine and Environmental Services is charged with enforcing this bylaw, but voluntary citizen cooperation will be the key to its success.

The Bylaw applies to nitrogen used to fertilize grass only. The Bylaw does not apply to fertilizer used on your flower and vegetable garden, greenhouse, houseplants, farm, or orchard. The Bylaw also does not apply to the establishment or repair of turf (after substantial damage) in its first growing season.

The Bylaw **bans** fertilizing any part of your lawn between **October 16<sup>th</sup> and April 14<sup>th</sup>**, or directly before or during a heavy rain event. Don't spill fertilizer on paved surfaces and quickly clean it up if you do.

The Bylaw recommends that if you fertilize lawns not covered by the 100' prohibition, **fertilize sparingly!** The Bylaw encourages use of materials such as yard waste, compost or other similar materials that are primarily organic in nature to improve the physical condition of your soil.

Thank you for your cooperation in improving the quality of Falmouth's waters.

Sincerely,

Gregg Fraser, Director, Marine and Environmental Services