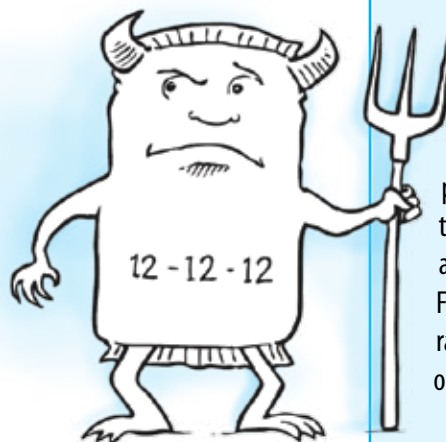




## Thanks for not using phosphorus (if you fertilize)

Since January 2007, city residents have stopped using lawn fertilizers that contain phosphorus. Local home and garden stores are well stocked with river-safe fertilizers (make sure the middle number on the bag is 0). Stopping the unnecessary use of phosphorus in fertilizers protects the river and helps us meet a federal mandate to reduce phosphorus in the Huron River by 50 percent. There is plenty of phosphorus in our soils. When the soil can't hold any more phosphorus, it washes off with the rainwater and flows into storm drains and creeks that run to the river. Once in the river, phosphorus encourages the overgrowth of algae. Too much algae blocks out sun and oxygen; kills healthy water plants, insects, and fish; and lowers the water quality for wildlife, recreation, and drinking water treatment.

Ann Arbor's phosphorus ordinance only applies to lawn fertilizers. Garden and tree fertilizers may contain phosphorus, as well as lawn fertilizers where soil tests within the last three years indicate that phosphorus is needed. For more information, please check the city's Web site at [www.a2gov.org/green](http://www.a2gov.org/green) or contact the Environmental Coordinator at [mnaud@a2gov.org](mailto:mnaud@a2gov.org).

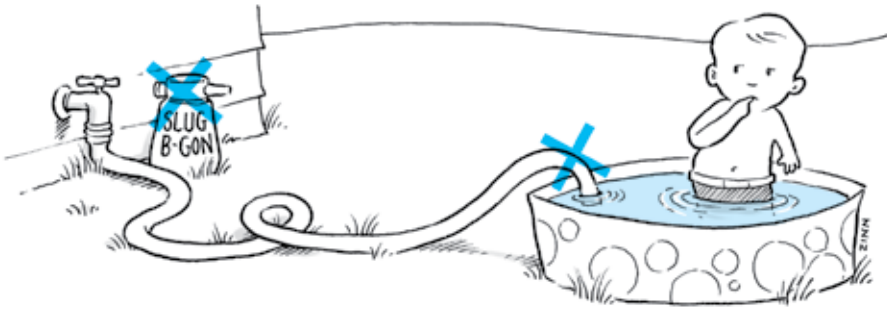


## Stormwater rate-reduction credits available

You can lower your stormwater bill by taking steps to protect stormwater quality and reduce the amount of water draining from your property. If you are a one- or two-family residential customer, consider using up to three of these optional stormwater credits. You can learn more and apply on-line at [www.a2gov.org/storm](http://www.a2gov.org/storm) or call the Customer Service line at 734.994.2666.

- Make your home a **RiverSafe Home** partner and save \$1.24/quarter. Review Washtenaw County's online RiverSafe home information and take the survey. The survey is also available by mail by calling 734.222.6860. Participants receive a RiverSafe Home plaque. There is no cost to enroll.
- Install **rain barrels** on your downspouts and save \$1.79/quarter (total, for one or more rain barrels). Rain barrels are sold locally at many garden centers and also online. The city's Web site provides postings of periodic local rain barrel workshops and bulk sale opportunities, as available.
- Create a **rain garden, cistern, or drywell** (limited to one of these per property) and save \$2.80/quarter. In addition to being beneficial for the watershed, rain gardens can be a very attractive landscaping feature. Details on how to qualify for these options are posted online.

If you have nonresidential property, commercial properties, or residential apartment units larger than two units, your location may qualify for additional credits, as described online or by phone. For more information on the city's stormwater rates, online property assessments, and credit opportunities, please visit: [www.a2gov.org/storm](http://www.a2gov.org/storm).



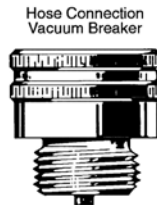
## Prevent water backflow

Imagine this scenario: A woman sprays a commercial weed killer on her lawn by using a hose attachment. Afterwards she disconnects the applicator and takes a drink of water from the hose. A short time later she is admitted to the emergency room with symptoms of poisoning. What happened? At some time while the woman was spraying the weed killer, water pressure dropped, which resulted in the poison being sucked back into the hose. Later, when she drank from the hose, the poison inside was released with the water.

### How do you protect yourself from backflow situations?

- First, keep all hoses and faucets away from direct contact with possible contaminants. Never submerge hoses in buckets, pools, tubs, or sinks. In the event of loss of water pressure, you need an air gap, otherwise, the hose will act like a straw and suck the liquid backwards.
- Second, protect yourself by installing inexpensive backflow protection devices on all hoses and threaded faucets in your home. These devices are available at hardware and home improvement stores for about \$4-10 each. Backflow vacuum breakers provide safety valves that prevent liquids from flowing backwards into a hose or faucet.

Specialized backflow prevention devices are available for more elaborate installations such as built-in lawn irrigation sprinklers, hot water boilers, in-ground swimming pools, heat exchangers, active solar heating systems, and specialized commercial locations, including dry cleaners, car washes, laboratories, and manufacturers. Backflow devices ensure that potentially contaminated water cannot be drawn back into the public water supply from a business or residence in the event of a negative water-main pressure situation. If you receive a letter from the Water Utility informing you that a device is due for certification and inspection, please respond as quickly as possible to protect water quality and safety. Proper maintenance of backflow prevention devices requires a periodic certification (proof that the device is working), followed by a City of Ann Arbor inspection, and the subsequent annual reporting of those results to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). For more information on specialized backflow requirements, contact either a plumber (certified on backflow prevention devices) or the City of Ann Arbor Customer Service Center (at 994.2666).



## Good to Know...

- **Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation registration is available online at [www.a2gov.org/parks](http://www.a2gov.org/parks).** Sign up for classes and programs 24/7. Copies of the 2008 Spring/Summer Program Guide are available at all A2 Parks & Recreation facilities, City Hall, the downtown district library as well as online. Please note: It is the intent of the city to provide equal opportunities and access to all programs and facilities. For special assistance or accommodation, please contact the individual facility.
- **You can assist families in need of utility shutoff protection by making a donation to the City of Ann Arbor Assistance Fund through your quarterly water bill payment.** Since 1984, people have been able to contribute through to the city's Assistance Fund, which supports the local Barrier Busters program.
- **The 7th Annual Mayor's Green Fair will be held on Friday, June 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. on Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor.** Free entertainment, exhibits, hands-on youth activities, green energy demonstrations, WasteKnot business partners, green transportation models, and more! [www.a2gov.org/green](http://www.a2gov.org/green).
- **May 5-9, 2008 is Water Quality Awareness Week.** Stop by the Customer Service Center, 220 E. Huron (across from City Hall) for special activities. Information will be also posted on the web at [www.a2gov.org/A2H20](http://www.a2gov.org/A2H20).

For more information on the Footing Drain Disconnection project, visit [www.a2fdd.com](http://www.a2fdd.com) or call 734.213.5444.