

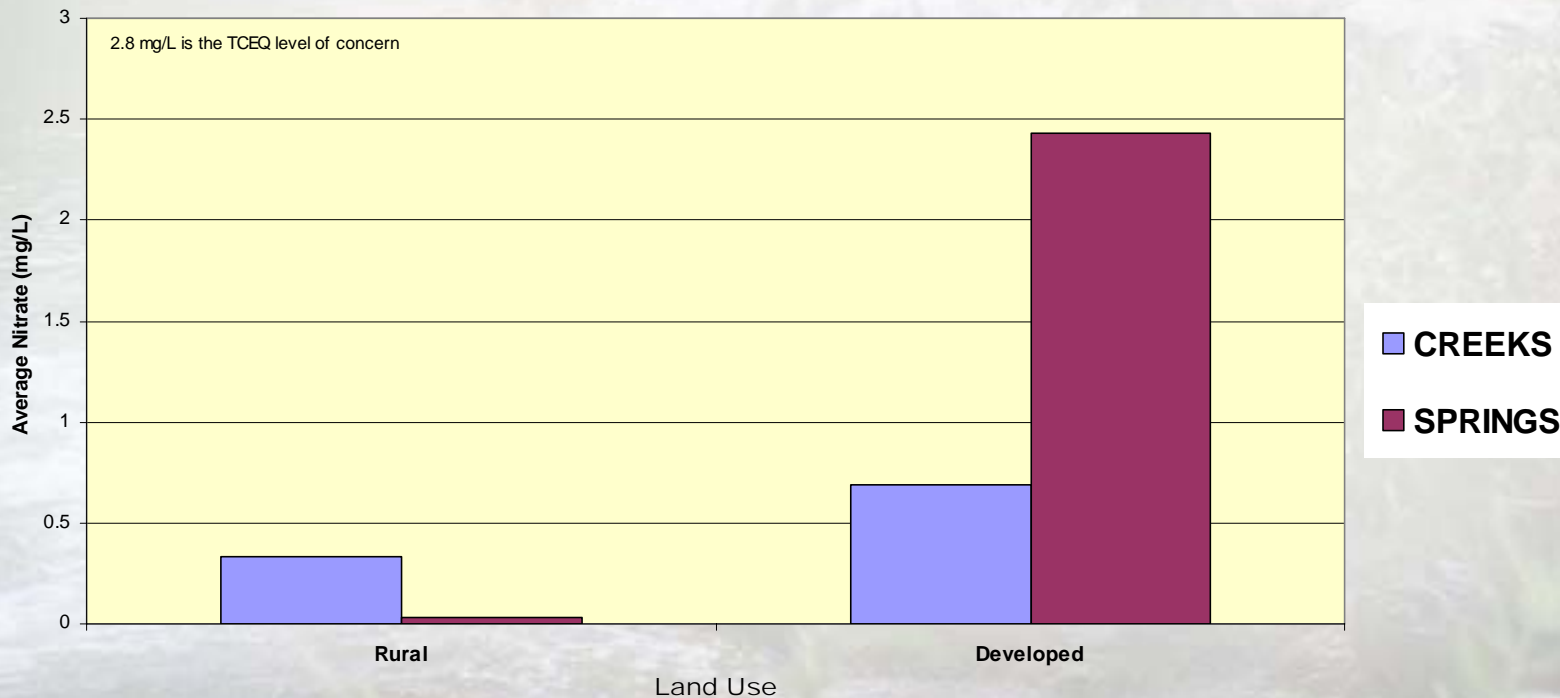
# Texas *Water Quality* Connection



**Avoid Weed and Feed**

# Texas Water Quality Connection

Austin-wide Average Nitrate Levels:  
Creeks vs. Springs





## Mission

To provide homeowners with earth-wise gardening solutions in order to reduce landscaping chemicals in Austin's waterways.



## Components

- Provide fact sheets on gardening basics and common pest/disease problems
- Distribute at the point of purchase
- Offer free training for sales staff





# Texas Water Quality Connection

## Successes

- Displays at over 50 retailers
- 1.3 million fact sheets distributed
- 465,000 web hits last year

**grow green** earth-wise guide to **Fire Ants**

**Least Toxic Solutions**

Regularly identify fire ant areas -- many other species occur in Texas and some are their natural predators and the Extension office is the best resource for identification.

- Carefully pour a large pot of water over the area to kill a mound above ground.
- Hand-dug mounds can be removed by hand as well as grass applied to mounds will do so.
- Chemical baits are most effective and formulated to be safe for bees, birds, and other beneficial insects as well as grass applied to mounds will do so.
- For mounds that are less than 100,000, use a bait station in a year-end April.
- Before using baits, use a thick layer of mulch.
- In hot weather, apply in the late afternoon -- avoid if possible.
- Consider timing before application.
- Avoid application before 10:00 AM or after 5:00 PM.
- If you feel you must use chemicals, avoid using any such as diazinon or Dursban for residential use.
- Use baits only when you do not see them in the area.

**product toxicity comparisons\***  
Listed for endorsement purposes

Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Hazard				
		Acute Toxicity	Chronic Toxicity	Water Quality	Endangered Species	Other
<b>Baits</b>						
Exterminator <sup>®</sup> Fire Ant Killer (baits)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
Exterminator <sup>®</sup> Professional Fire Ant Killer (baits)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
Exterminator <sup>®</sup> Fire Ant Killer (baits)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
Exterminator <sup>®</sup> Fire Ant Killer (baits)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
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<b>Contact</b>						
Baiting Station (one 2 gallons per mound)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
The Terminator <sup>®</sup> Baits Station (Indoxacarb)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
Exterminator <sup>®</sup> Fire Ant Killer (baits)	Indoxacarb	C	2	3	3	3
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**Why grow green?**  
The Grow Green program advocates least toxic solutions on the LEAST TOXIC approach to pest management and responsible fire ant control. The goal is to reduce the amount of toxic chemicals that "leach" into our water or run off into our groundwater and degrade water quality.

Grow Green is a partnership between the Texas Department of Agriculture, the City of Austin Water and Sewer Department and the Texas Department of Health Services. Call 512-251-1000 or 800-848-8488 for more information or visit our website at [www.growgreen.org](http://www.growgreen.org)

Partners: **Waterland Protection Development System** 876-2530, **UT Extension** 817-492-1100

Grow Green encourages least toxic solutions. [www.growgreen.org](http://www.growgreen.org)

## Fertilizer Studies/ Results

- Statewide recommendation for reduced fertilizer application rates in environmentally-sensitive regions
- Working relationships with Scotts, Lebanon, Ladybug and Purcells





## Spread the Word!

- TCEQ has provided fact sheets to four Council of Governments
- Under a new EPA grant, TCEQ will distribute at least five fact sheets to six major Texas markets



## Weed and Feed Materials

- Web Enhancement
- Weed Fact Sheet
- Austin Guide to...

The screenshot shows a website page with a navigation menu on the left and a main content area. The navigation menu includes: Home, Hot Topics, About Us, Partners, Retailers, Gardening Basics, Landscape Problems, Plants, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Events/Training, Data/Studies, Related Programs/Resources, and Watershed Home. The main content area features a decorative header with the text 'grow green' and 'landscaping for clean water'. The main heading is 'Weed and Feed', accompanied by a small image of a ladybug. The text below reads: 'Austin scientists are finding high levels of nitrates and increasing detections of the weed killer, atrazine, in monitoring samples. Both are believed to be tied to fertilizer use. The goal of the weed and feed campaign is to help homeowners improve their product choices, application rates and disposal habits.' To the right is a red box with a photo of a man holding a bag of 'Weed and Feed' fertilizer and the text 'Harms Weeds. Harms Water.' Below this are two bullet points: 'Outreach Campaign' and 'TV Spot'. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Avoid Weed and Feed' with three sub-sections: 'Problems' (with a photo of the man holding the fertilizer bag), 'Solutions' (with a photo of a person weeding), and 'Data/Resources' (with a photo of a person applying fertilizer). At the very bottom, there are three buttons: 'Gardening Basics', 'Landscape Problems', and 'Plants'.

grow green landscaping for clean water

Home  
Hot Topics  
About Us  
Partners  
Retailers  
Gardening Basics  
Landscape Problems  
Plants  
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)  
Events/Training  
Data/Studies  
Related Programs/Resources  
Watershed Home

### Weed and Feed

Austin scientists are finding high levels of nitrates and increasing detections of the weed killer, atrazine, in monitoring samples. Both are believed to be tied to fertilizer use. The goal of the weed and feed campaign is to help homeowners improve their product choices, application rates and disposal habits.

**Weed and Feed**  
Harms Weeds.  
Harms Water.

- Outreach Campaign
- TV Spot

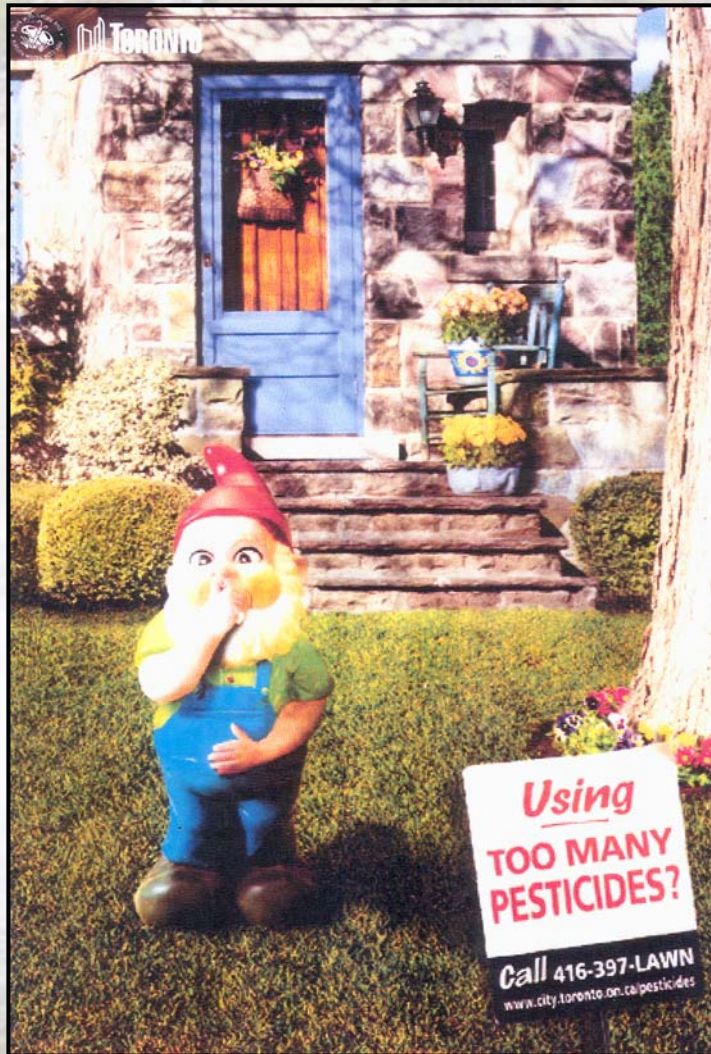
### Avoid Weed and Feed

Problems Solutions Data/Resources

Gardening Basics Landscape Problems Plants



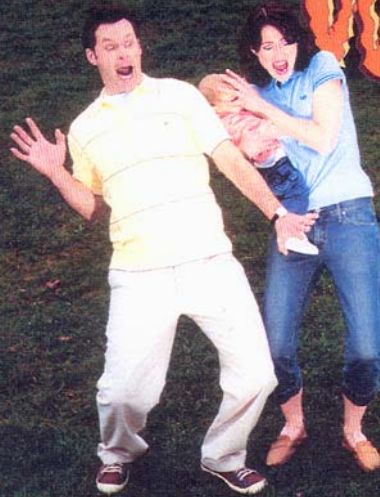
# Texas Water Quality Connection





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**RELAX IT'S  
JUST A  
WEED**



*REDUCING PESTICIDES. IT'S PERFECTLY NATURAL.*

GO PESTICIDE FREE, AND LEARN TO LIVE WITH A FEW. FOR PESTICIDE BY-LAW INFO  
CALL 416-338-7600 OR VISIT [www.toronto.ca/pesticides](http://www.toronto.ca/pesticides)







# Texas *Water Quality* Connection



**Is your lawn chemical-free?**

**Receive 20% off  
organic lawn-care products with this card**



## Weed & Feed





## Weed & Feed

### Pilot Neighborhoods

- Materials Distribution
- Pre- and Post-Survey
- Hike to Backdoor Spring



## Weed & Feed

### Pre-Survey:

Q: Where do you get your landscaping advice?

- **42% - Sales Staff**
- 27% - Grow Green

Q: When do you fertilize?

- **35% - Before Rain**
- 27% - Water In



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## Weed & Feed

Post-Survey:

Q: Where have you heard about Avoid Weed and Feed?

- 21% - TV
- **81% - Neighborhood Mail Out**
- 7% - Haven't Heard



## **Weed & Feed**

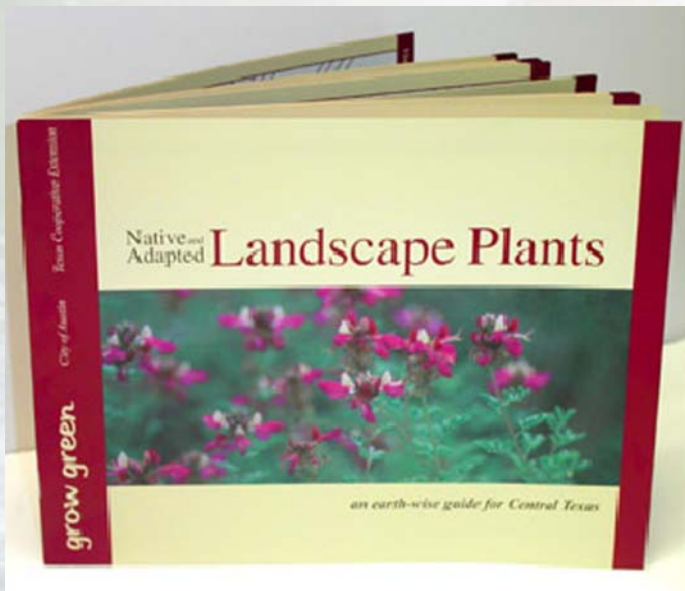
Post-Survey:

**Q: Tell us about your fertilizing practices?**

- **53% - Never Used Weed and Feed**
- **35% - Stopped Using Weed and Feed**
- **6% - Still Use Weed and Feed**

***85% - Previously Used and Stopped***

## Why Have We Invited You?



**Partnering  
creates  
market demand**



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