

Battling Bugs May Do More Harm Than Good!

Summer is here and along with the hot weather and sunshine people are seeing and feeling more insects. While some insects actually help your garden, others can do a lot of damage. And most of the time, people battle these pesky critters with a barrage of pesticides. But the heavy use of pesticides can do more harm than good. While they do help get rid of unwanted insects, pesticides can also lead to environmental problems. The chemicals many people use on their lawn can end up in Radcliff-area streams such as Mill Creek and the Salt River in the form of runoff pollution.

Pesticides are toxic chemicals that can severely harm humans, animals, aquatic organisms and plants. When it rains, the excess pesticides are washed down lawns and driveways, into the streets and down the storm drains. Once down the storm drain, the untreated toxins flow into channels and eventually end up in local bodies of water, such as Saunders Springs. Once pesticides are in the streams, they are directly toxic to aquatic wildlife and can accumulate in the food chain.

There are steps people can take to minimize pesticide runoff. Keep the following tips in mind when treating for insect problems:

- ✍ Use a pesticide that is specifically designed to control the pest. The insect should be listed on the label.
- ✍ Approximately 90 percent of the insects that live in your lawn and garden are not harmful.
- ✍ Read labels carefully. Use products only as directed. In their zeal to control the problem, many gardeners use pesticides at more than 20 times the recommended rate.
- ✍ When disposing of empty pesticide containers, rinse the container and use the water as you would the product.
- ✍ Explore alternative pest control methods such as using traps, or biological controls like predatory insects and bacterial insecticides.

For more information about storm water pollution and how to keep our environment clean, call Radcliff City Hall at (270) 351-4714 or visit our website at www.radcliff.org.