

CAREFUL WHERE YOU POINT THAT THING

You can help
preserve Gore Creek.
Here's how.



GUIDE FOR LANDSCAPING CREW

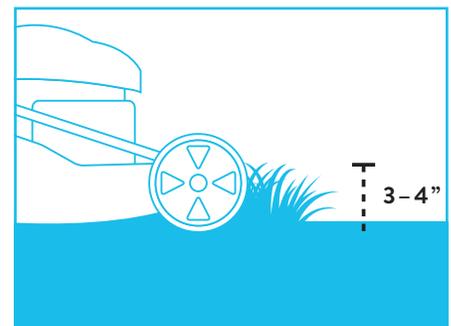
As a professional landscape contractor in Vail, you do a lot to keep our town beautiful. But you may not realize that Gore Creek—the main waterway that meanders through town—is suffering the impact of fertilizers, pesticides, and landscaping techniques that destroy native vegetation.

As rain or melting snow flows across our yards, rooftops, and paved areas, it picks up pollutants including sediment, organic matter, pesticides and fertilizers. Polluted water then flows off these properties to roadways, ditches or through storm drains to Gore Creek, harming important aquatic insects, increasing algae blooms and adding sediment all of which impact the food chain for our prized trout fishery. The cumulative impacts of urbanization in the Gore Creek valley over the past half-century have had a significant impact on the health of Gore Creek, including the insects, fish, birds and vegetation that depend on clean water.

The good news is you can help. In fact, your daily work activities could be the key to restoring the health of our streams and creeks. Here are a few simple tips to keep in mind.

LAWNMOWING

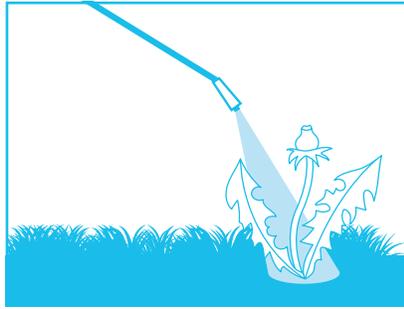
- Maintain lawns at 3–4 inches, which will maximize the grass's capacity to filter and absorb excess runoff and nutrients.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn or compost them, as they can carry fertilizer and pesticide residue into the creek.
- Sweep clippings off of paved walks and roadways and back onto the lawn to prevent them from entering drainage ways. Compost yard waste or have your waste hauler remove it.



PESTICIDE USE

- Utilize Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques before deciding to use pesticides. IPM endorses multiple methods for managing pests including mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical means.
- **ALWAYS** read the product label before use. The label describes allowed uses, environmental hazards (including impacts to aquatic environments), and application rates. Using a pesticide outside the label is illegal. Remember: **THE LABEL IS THE LAW.**

- Spot-spray weeds rather than spraying an entire property.
- In early spring, wait to apply lawn-care chemicals until snow has melted.
- Avoid pyrethroid insecticides near streams and waterways. These products, which include bifenthrin, cypermethrin and permethrin, are among the most toxic to aquatic invertebrates.
- Be cautious and judicious with the use of “weed and feed” lawn care products. Many contain the herbicide 2,4-D as a weed killer, which is listed as toxic to aquatic invertebrates.
- Add a natural buffer around turf areas, which will help filter fertilizers and pesticides before they can enter drainage ways.
- Dispose of garden chemicals correctly. Never sweep, hose off or pour leftover chemicals into drains or gutters. Dispose of unused products at your local household hazardous waste site, such as the Eagle County landfill.



FERTILIZER

- Fertilizer application differs with turf species, varying from 2 to 4 pounds of actual nitrogen/year per 1,000 square feet and usually divided into 3 to 4 applications per year; generally, no more than 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet should be applied at one time.
- Fertilize only when necessary or not at all.
- Apply fertilizer in the fall for best results, or use a lesser amount in the spring to give lawns an extra burst of green.
- Ask homeowners to deeply water their lawns the day before you apply fertilizer.
- When purchasing fertilizer, look for a product that contains “natural organic” or “slow-release” ingredients, which feed plants slowly and evenly.
- Read labels carefully for application rates and recommendations.
- If fertilizing is appropriate, check the weather before applications; avoid the use of fertilizer if the forecast calls for rain in the next two days.
- Apply fertilizer when wind speed is between 3 and 10 mph.
- For ground boom applications, apply using a nozzle height of no more than 2 feet above the ground or crop canopy, unless a greater height is required for efficacy or safety. Use a low-pressure, large droplet sprayer, and spray close to the crop canopy or the ground.



Avoid mowing and fertilizer application within 25 feet of Gore Creek. Use Integrated Pest Management techniques for weed and pest control. Use pesticides as a last resort, and only according to their label. Allowing native species to thrive here is crucial to the creek’s recovery.

