

example of what can happen sometimes when people meaning to do the right thing look for quick fixes.

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## Don't Point Fingers... Point Out Facts

I hope that all of the people concerned about the St. John's fertilizer ordinance attended the FTGA's one day seminars where Dr. John Cisar spoke on his recent work with St. Augustinegrass.

He showed that turf fertilized with 6 lb N/1000 sq. ft./year did not have significant nitrate leaching; levels were at 1 ppm or less. This was done on a sloped area, and confirms what university trials have shown throughout the United States: Turf is an excellent environmental buffer between us and our groundwater. Turf is part of the solution, not part of the problem.

As the vice president of FTGA, and a technical manager for the largest lawn care company in existence, I would like to point out that FTGA lobbies for all of the greens industry. Our members include golf courses, lawn care companies, sod producers, and people servicing sports fields.

Also, please note that golf courses are not exempt from the St. John's ordinance! Only greens are exempt. Fairways, tees, and roughs still must comply with the ordinance. It is very important not to point fingers at other segments of the industry. When

properly managed, all turfgrass has environmental plusses, and we need to be proud of our industry.

ERICA SANTELLA  
District Manager  
TruGreen-Chemlawn

## Fertilizer Ordinance is Really No Surprise

I am not surprised that an ordinance was passed limiting the use of soluble nitrogen and phosphorous, but I am surprised that the first ordinance of this kind came from St. Johns County.

I know that the EPA, Fla. DEP, the water management districts in Florida and throughout the country are struggling with this same issue: nutrient loading of waterways and the side effects of those nutrients. We don't have to look far to see some of the symptoms, Everglades, Lake Apopka, Indian River Lagoon, and Lake Okeechobee. Nationally, Chesapeake Bay, rivers in South Carolina and dead zones in the Gulf of Mexico have problems in which nutrient loading of waterways is suspected.

But why is St. Johns County deciding to do something about it? Why just lawns? Why not golf courses and agriculture also? What should we as turf grass managers do about it? (*Ed. Note: Only golf course greens are exempt from the ordinance.*)

St. Johns County is probably the last coastal county to experience major growth in Florida. As a result of being last, they have the luxury of learning

from everyone else's mistakes. Perhaps they are looking at the growth to the north and further south and what it has done to the natural environments and believe that prevention of a problem may be cheaper than paying to fix a problem.

Don't write off St. Johns County as a

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