

COMMUNITY LETTERS Be a responsible land steward in your yard

Take a step toward responsible land stewardship by doing less yard work this spring. Omit chemical fertilizer and weed killers. Pesticides cause unintended consequences and disrupt natural systems that sustain us. One of those is the recent alarming decrease in the number of birds, bugs and bees. Another is the pollution of urban stream water.

Pesticides can negatively affect the development of children. See data titled "Evidence of Harm" at goodneighbor Iowa.org at the University of Northern Iowa. If you are planning to apply lawn chemicals, first consider whether the health and environmental impacts are worth it.

Iowa City, Coralville, North Liberty and Marion support land stewardship by offering rebates to improve the soil quality of urban yards. For instance, at icgov.org you will find a program called "Your Best Lawn," which states "cleaner water in our streams starts in your backyard. We can help you get a lawn you are proud of with less chemicals." Dandelion and clover blossoms are early spring food for rapidly disappearing pollinators. Please, let them grow. Be a good steward for the health and welfare of future generations. This is nature's bounty.

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