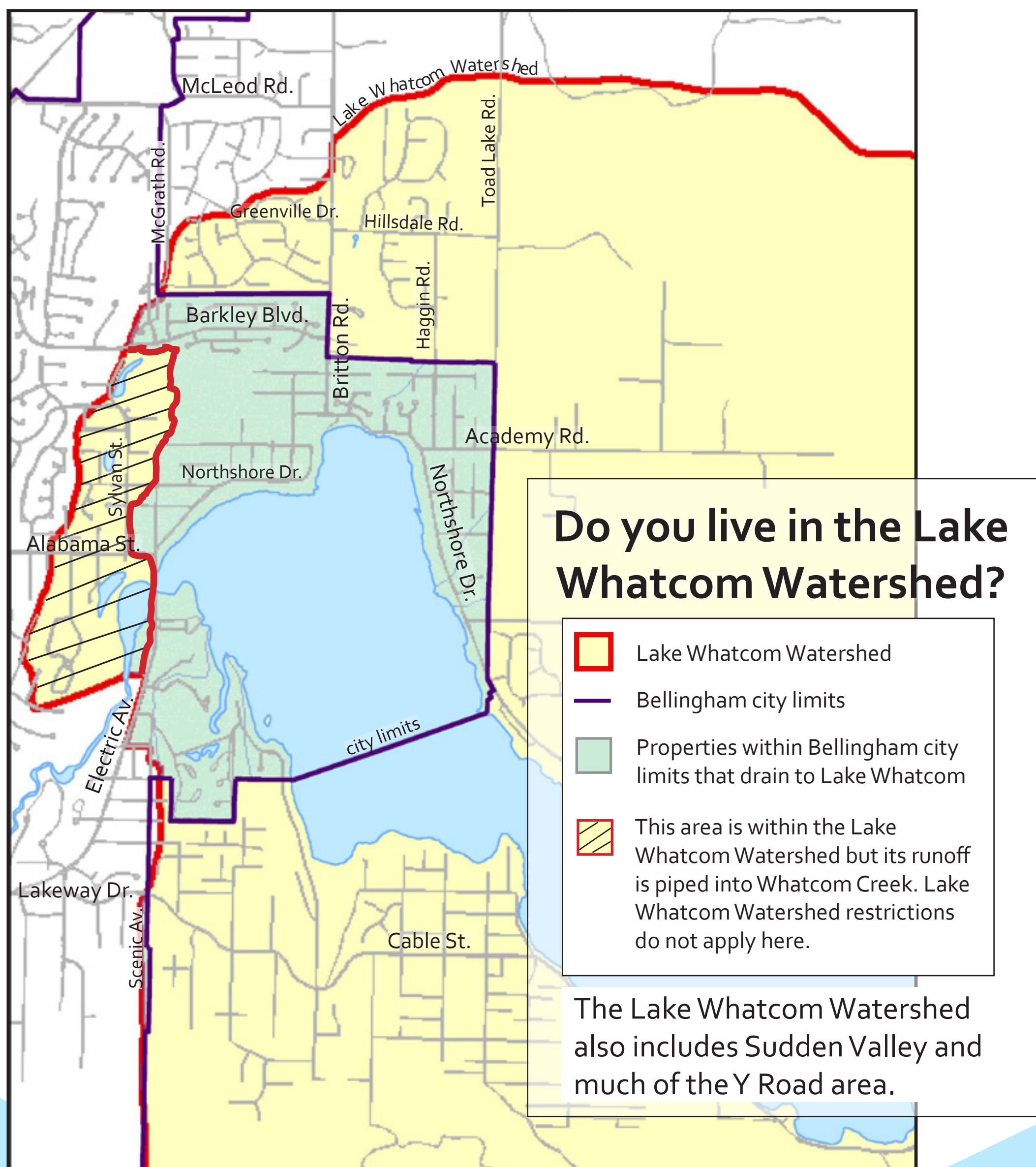


# Lake Whatcom Residents:

Only use fertilizers, mulches and soil amendments that are labeled as **0% phosphorus**.

Look for the **Zero!**

Fertilizer packages will show nutrient ratios listed in this order: nitrogen, **phosphorus**, potassium. Look for the middle number. **Only use those that are labeled as 0% phosphorus**. Check the label on bags or ask if bulk materials have been tested.



## It's the Law: Lake Whatcom Ordinances

Please note the differences between the two ordinances. To read the full ordinances, visit [www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml](http://www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml)

**City of Bellingham Residents**  
(BMC 15.42.050 D)

**Applies to Fertilizers, Mulches, and Soil Amendments on Any Property**

- Don't apply any fertilizers, mulches, or soil amendments in the Lake Whatcom Watershed that are labeled as containing **phosphorus**.
- Don't apply when the ground is frozen.
- Don't apply on impervious surfaces. Clean spills immediately.

**Whatcom County Residents**  
(WCC 16.32)

**Applies to Fertilizers on Residential Lawns and Public Properties**

- Don't apply any fertilizers to lawns or public properties in the Lake Whatcom Watershed that are labeled as containing **phosphorus**, except on newly established lawns in the first growing season.
- Don't apply when the ground is frozen.
- Don't apply on impervious surfaces. Clean spills immediately.



## What's the problem with phosphorus in Lake Whatcom?

Unnaturally high levels of **phosphorus** in Lake Whatcom are a significant factor leading to algae growth and **low oxygen** levels. Increased **algae** may lead to substantially increased drinking water treatment **costs** and impair aquatic **habitat** and recreational uses, as well as result in **violations** of state and federal water quality regulations.

**Guidelines for Gardening Materials and Practices in the Lake Whatcom Watershed**  
Revised 12/06/14

Municipal Code 15.42.050 prohibits use of fertilizers, mulches, and soil amendments containing more than trace amounts of phosphorus in the Lake Whatcom Watershed. For lawn fertilizers, mulches, and soil amendments, the phosphorus content must be 0%. For other fertilizers, a range of locally available materials have been identified that are consistent with reducing watershed pollution and with protecting human and animal health. This set of guidelines identifies recommended soil amendments and practices for organic materials originating on parcels in the watershed that are not recommended, on environmental and plant health grounds. It also identifies some general gardening practices that can help reduce phosphorus and improve soil health. It is recommended to determine the need for additional organic materials or nutrients. See [www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml](http://www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml) for additional information. Call WSU Extension at 360-876-4736.

STEWARDSHIP SOLUTIONS

**LAKE WHATCOM COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT**

Protect Your Drinking Water

**Phosphorus**  
Too Much of a Good Thing

**City of Bellingham Public Works**  
360-778-7700

**Whatcom County Public Works**  
360-715-7450

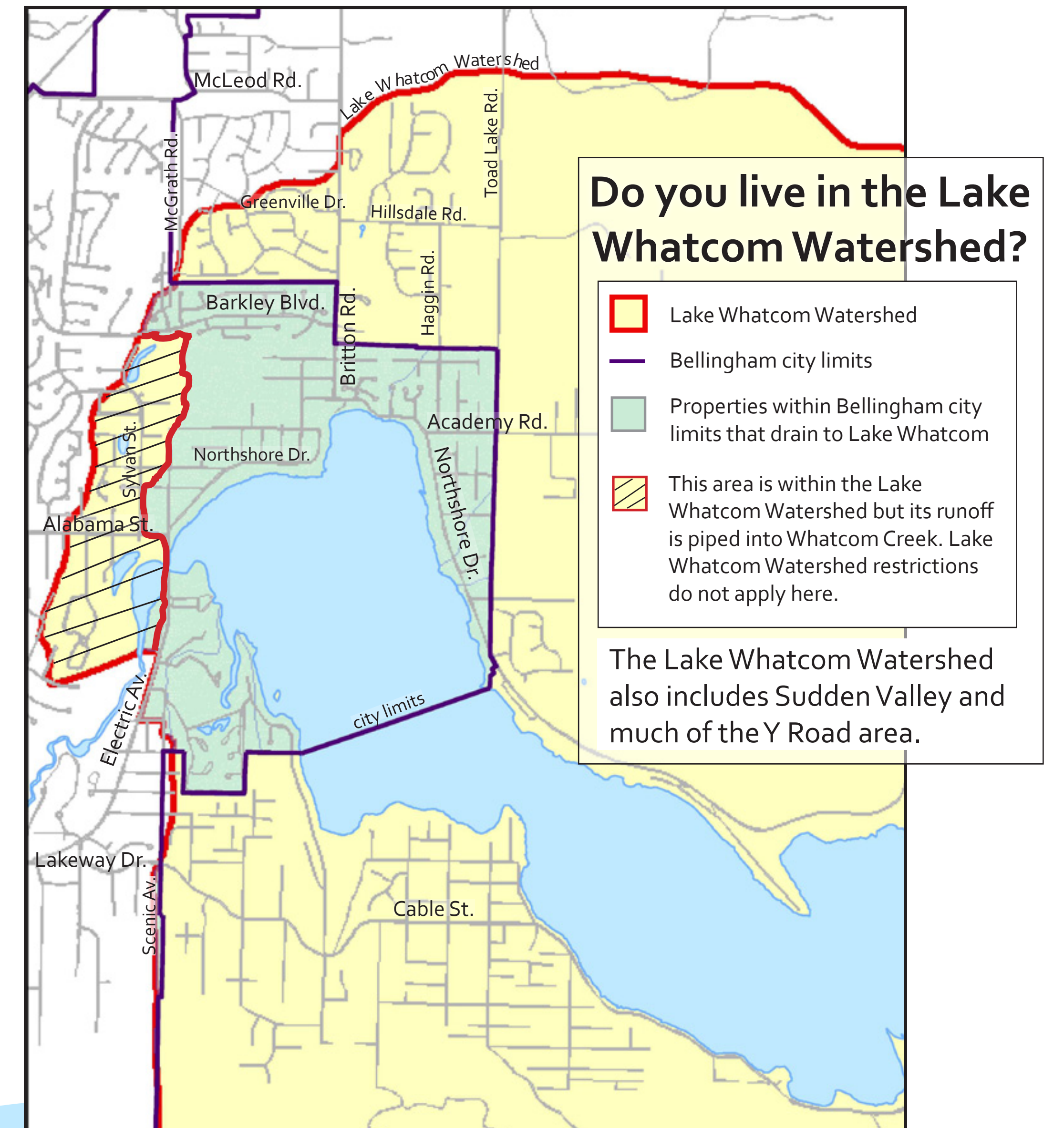
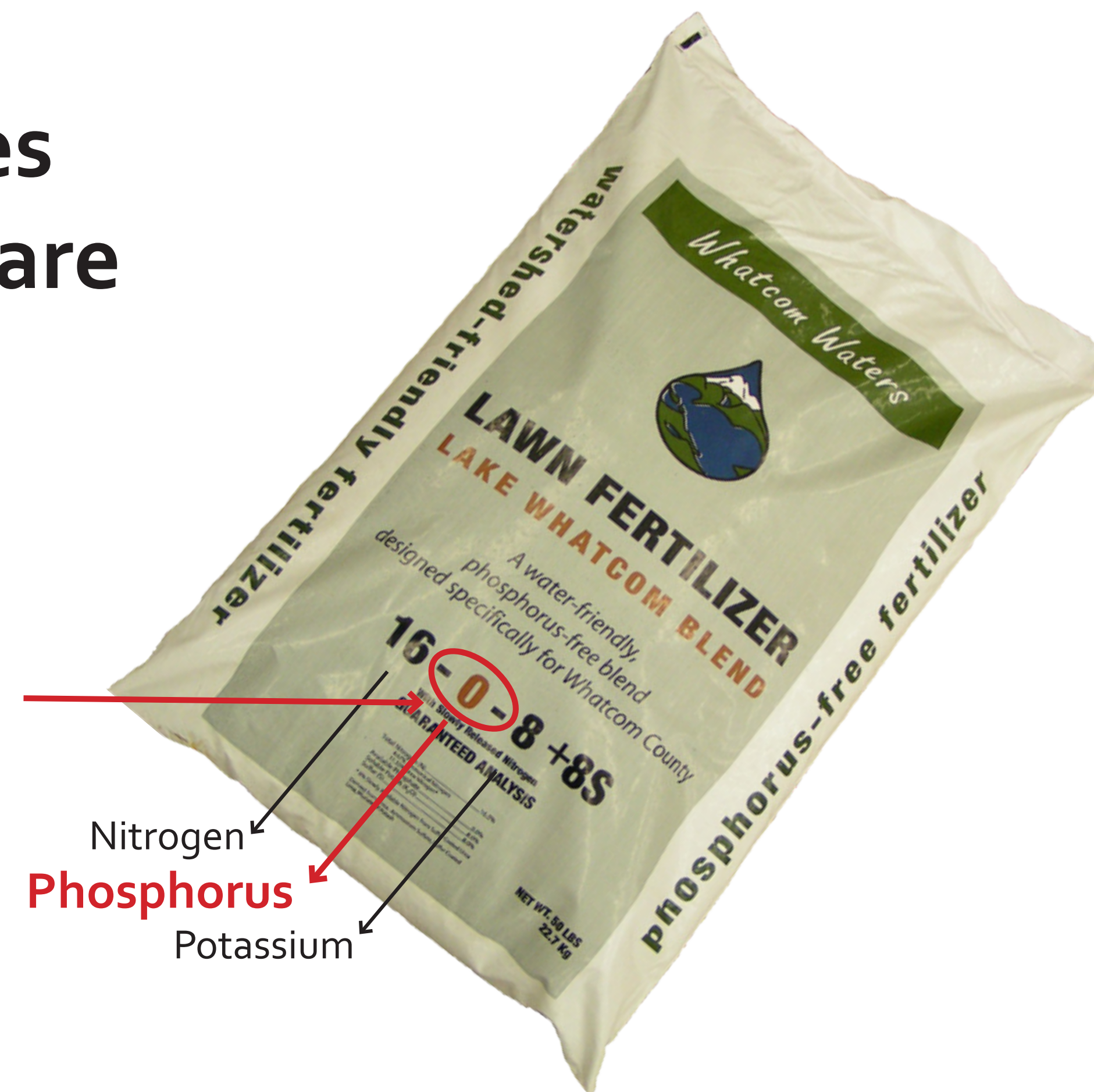
**Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District**  
360-734-9224

# Lake Whatcom Residents:

Only use fertilizers, mulches and soil amendments that are labeled as **0% phosphorus**.

Look for the **Zero!**

Fertilizer packages will show nutrient ratios listed in this order: nitrogen, **phosphorus**, potassium. Look for the middle number. Only use those that are labeled as **0% phosphorus**. Check the label on bags or ask if bulk materials have been tested.



**Do you live in the Lake Whatcom Watershed?**

- Lake Whatcom Watershed
- ▭ Bellingham city limits
- ▭ Properties within Bellingham city limits that drain to Lake Whatcom
- ▨ This area is within the Lake Whatcom Watershed but its runoff is piped into Whatcom Creek. Lake Whatcom Watershed restrictions do not apply here.

The Lake Whatcom Watershed also includes Sudden Valley and much of the Y Road area.

## It's the Law: Lake Whatcom Ordinances

Please note the differences between the two ordinances. To read the full ordinances, visit [www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml](http://www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml)

**City of Bellingham Residents**  
(BMC 15.42.050 D)

**Applies to Fertilizers, Mulches, and Soil Amendments on Any Property**

- Don't apply any fertilizers, mulches, or soil amendments in the Lake Whatcom Watershed that are labeled as containing **phosphorus**.
- Don't apply when the ground is frozen.
- Don't apply on impervious surfaces. Clean spills immediately.

**Whatcom County Residents**  
(WCC 16.32)

**Applies to Fertilizers on Residential Lawns and Public Properties**

- Don't apply any fertilizers to lawns or public properties in the Lake Whatcom Watershed that are labeled as containing **phosphorus**, except on newly established lawns in the first growing season.
- Don't apply when the ground is frozen.
- Don't apply on impervious surfaces. Clean spills immediately.



## What's the problem with phosphorus in Lake Whatcom?

Unnaturally high levels of **phosphorus** in Lake Whatcom are a significant factor leading to algae growth and **low oxygen** levels. Increased **algae** may lead to substantially increased drinking water treatment **costs** and impair aquatic **habitat** and recreational uses, as well as result in **violations** of state and federal water quality regulations.

**Guidelines for Gardening Materials and Practices in the Lake Whatcom Watershed**  
Revised 12/06/16

Municipal Code 15.42.050 prohibits the use of fertilizers, mulches, and soil amendments containing more than 0.1% phosphorus by weight. For products containing more than 0.1% phosphorus by weight, the label should list a "0" for the content of phosphorus by weight. For fertilizers, a range of locally available materials have been identified that are consistent with reducing watershed pollution and with protecting water quality. This set of guidelines identifies recommended soil amendments and practices for organic materials originating on parcels in the watershed that are not recommended, or environmental and plant health grounds. Some general gardening and horticultural recommendations to reduce phosphorus and improve soil health. It is recommended to determine the need for additional organic materials or nutrients. See [www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml](http://www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org/regulations.shtml) for additional information.

STEWARDSHIP SOLUTIONS

**LAKE WHATCOM COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT**

Protect Your Drinking Water

**Phosphorus**  
Too Much of a Good Thing

**City of Bellingham Public Works**  
360-778-7700

**Whatcom County Public Works**  
360-715-7450

**Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District**  
360-734-9224