

Neuse Education Team i m p a c t s

Urban Impacts 4.

Sensible Survey

Understanding homeowner attitudes and behaviors about fertilizer and pesticide use has proven an effective educational tool in combating the notion that most homeowners over apply.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

"This is a one-of-a-kind survey in the entire United States. All other data of this type are best guesses."

*— Deanna Osmond,
Neuse Education Team*

From the beginning, the Neuse Education Team sought to understand homeowner attitudes about important water quality issues that they can relate to — fertilizer and pesticide use. Volunteers and team members went door-to-door in Cary, Goldsboro, Kinston New Bern and Greenville and interviewed from 3% to 6% of the homeowners in these communities on their fertilizer and pesticide use.

The results of this survey continue to guide the homeowner component of the Neuse Education Team's outreach activities. The data collected provide very solid information on homeowner fertilizer and pesticide use.



- The purpose of the survey was to determine fertilizer and pesticide use among homeowners in different communities in the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico River Basins.
- The survey found that most homeowners only slightly over apply nitrogen fertilizer. Over application occurred most frequently where centpede grass is grown.
- In one particular community, the survey revealed that lawn care providers applied more nitrogen per area than the homeowners.
- Communities differ in the amount of residents who use fertilizer. For example, almost 90% of all residents use fertilizer in Cary as contrasted by only about 50% of the residents in Kinston.
- A practice that homeowners must improve on is sweeping fertilizer off hard surfaces so that it is not carried away with stormwater.

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