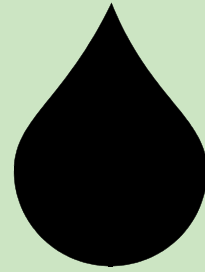


# Groundwater

## AGRI-BUSINESS STEWARDSHIP

*Brought to you by the Michigan Agri-Business Association  
through a grant from the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program*



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The objective of this document is to provide you with current and helpful information regarding groundwater protection, and the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program.

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### **Protecting Michigan water using filter strips**

Michigan's streams, rivers, lakes and other bodies of water are very important natural resources. We must protect them today and for generations to come. Minimizing runoff from fields, especially after recent planting or manure applications, is especially important.

One cost-effective management practice to help control runoff is by installing and maintaining grass filter strips and sod waterways.

### **Grass filter strips**

Grass filter strips can protect stream, ponds and lakes from sediment damage. They are a key component of many conservation compliance programs and are affordable and easy to maintain. To filter sediments, nutrients and pollutants from agriculture runoff, vegetative or grass strips of at least 30 feet wide can be used.

The best grasses for filter strips or waterways are sod-forming types, such as fescue or slow-spreading rhizome grasses that produce a tight mat to slow runoff and catch sediment.

- Before seeding, grade the area and remove any brush. Apply fertilizer; and firm up the seedbed.
- Increase the normal seeding rate for fall planting by at least 50 percent for a quick thick stand.
- Plant grass seed  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep; mulch with straw and anchor using a straight disk.
- Mow strips the first year to keep the grass from going to seed and to encourage the grass stand to thicken.
- Fertilize as needed; keep crop herbicide applications off waterways and buffer strips; interseeded legumes can also be used to supply nitrogen.
- Refrain from driving over buffer strips or waterways, especially in the first year, if possible.
- Maintain the width of buffer strips and waterways when tilling and planting crops nearby.
- Mow waterways and buffer strips regularly to encourage sod formation and limit weeds.

For questions, design assistance, and possible financial assistance contact your local Conservation District."

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