



LARRY HOGAN

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Governor Hogan Releases Enhanced Phosphorus Management Tool Regulations

Regulations part of a broader phosphorus initiative

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Larry Hogan today unveiled enhanced Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) regulations as part of a broader “Maryland Agriculture Phosphorus Initiative,” which will further Maryland’s efforts to improve water quality, strengthen the agricultural industry, and bolster rural economies.

“We have listened to the agricultural and environmental communities to find a fair and balanced plan for limiting phosphorus, and I am pleased to announce the details of that solution today,” said Governor Hogan. “The enhanced phosphorus management tool regulations and the broader Agriculture Phosphorus Initiative will protect water quality in the Chesapeake Bay while still supporting a vibrant agriculture industry in Maryland. We are providing immediate action to limit pollution, investing in new technology, seeking alternative uses for manure, and improving on-farm management of animal manures - none of which were included in the previous proposals.”

“I am excited that Maryland farmers have stepped up and proposed progressive steps that will accelerate our efforts to improve water quality while maintaining a viable industry,” said Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder. “These new initiatives speak to the commitment of Maryland farmers to follow the science and do what is right on their farms.”

The **new PMT regulations use the November 2014 PMT proposal as a starting point and make four significant enhancements** that address key concerns of the agricultural community while providing immediate environmental protection and comprehensive data on agricultural soil phosphorus conditions across the state. The four enhancements are as follows:

1. **Ensure adequate time for farmers to fully understand and plan for new requirements.** The proposal shifts the seven-year implementation schedule originally proposed such that all farms will start implementing the PMT one year later, effective 2016, with full implementation in 2022. This shift preserves the provision to allow farmers two full years to have nutrient management plans developed using both the

existing Phosphorus Site Index (PSI) and the new PMT before management changes are required.

2. **Assure agricultural producers that critical elements are available for implementation.** The state will evaluate key elements that need to be in place, including: markets to relocate additional amounts of manure; adequate infrastructure to handle and transport manure; and alternative uses and new technologies to begin to provide new outlets and markets for animal manures. Evaluations of these elements will be conducted for each respective tier as it prepares to transition from each management level and to full PMT implementation.
3. **Enact an immediate ban of additional phosphorus on soils highest in phosphorus.** Upon adoption of the regulations, fields with a soil Fertility Index Value (FIV) of 500 or greater will be banned from receiving additional phosphorus until the PMT is fully implemented, currently scheduled for 2022. These are the fields that are at the highest risk of phosphorus potentially leaving the farm and entering nearby waterways.
4. **Provide comprehensive information on soil phosphorus conditions statewide.** Beginning in 2016 and every six years thereafter, soil test phosphorus data will be collected for all farms in Maryland subject to nutrient management plan requirements. This data will provide the Maryland Department of Agriculture with accurate soil fertility data to monitor trends in phosphorus levels and help identify potential areas to redistribute newly available manure.

In addition to the enhanced PMT regulations, the wider “Agriculture Phosphorus Initiative” will include an **on-farm economic analysis project** that will start when the enhanced PMT regulations are promulgated. The Maryland Department of Agriculture will recruit 10 to 12 Maryland farmers to evaluate the economic impacts of implementing the PMT on a minimum of 1,000 acres. These farms will collect and provide farm-scale cost and crop yield data related to PMT implementation. The farms will represent a cross section of farm types and geography and include poultry, dairy, grain, and organic operations. The farm scale economic data collected, combined with information from running both the PSI and PMT, will inform resource needs for a more effective PMT implementation statewide.

Governor Hogan’s Agriculture Phosphorus Initiative also includes **funding for the Animal Waste Technology Grant Fund** for new technologies to improve manure management, create new sources of energy and products made from animal manure, and improve water quality.

The administration will also provide additional resources for **the Maryland Department of Agriculture to offset economic impacts** of implementing the more stringent environmental requirements on farms. The support will provide a stronger agricultural economy and share costs of environmental improvements. The level of support will be based on the on-farm economic analysis project described above.

For more details about the regulations and the broader initiative, click here. Additional information is also available at www.mda.maryland.gov/pmt