



Maryland



Nutrient Management News

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

NEW for 2018

Proof of NM Plan Now Required for Cost-Share

Farmers now need to provide proof that they have a current nutrient management plan when they apply for cost-share grants from the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program (MACS). The new requirement took effect January 1, 2018 and ensures that farmers who receive state cost-share grants are in compliance with state nutrient management requirements.

The one page certification must be submitted to the local soil conservation district office when applying for MACS grants to install best management practices, transport or inject manure, or plant cover crops. The farm's certified nutrient management consultant or certified farm operator will need to verify the information provided. Farmers should keep a completed copy of the certification with their records.

The nutrient management plan certification is a fillable form that may be downloaded from the department's website at mda.maryland.gov. Type *Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification Form* in the search engine. Download the form to your computer or device before completing. Forms also are available at soil conservation district offices.

Questions? Contact the MACS office at 410-841-5864.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Accountability and transparency are hallmarks of a well-managed organization. To assure Maryland taxpayers that farmers receiving state cost-share grants have a current nutrient management plan, the MACS program now requires proof of compliance. To keep things simple, MACS has designed a straightforward one-page certification that may be downloaded from our website or picked up at soil conservation districts. Information about a farm's nutrient management plan will need to be verified by the farm's nutrient management consultant or certified farm operator. Completed forms should be submitted to the local soil conservation district when applying for MACS cost-share grants. Don't forget to keep a copy with your files. You can read more about the new requirement in the accompanying article.

Soil health is gaining widespread attention these days both locally and nationally. Here in Maryland, the *Healthy Soils Act* is giving farmers the tools they need to explore new technologies that are good for their farms and good for the environment. In this issue, you'll learn about a new \$1 million grant that the department received to help farmers in four Eastern Shore counties test state-of-the-art practices that reduce nutrient losses and improve soil health.

You can also read about winter nutrient application restrictions now in effect, along with the ground rules for temporary stockpiles, and emergency procedures to prevent overflows from liquid manure structures.

Winter is a good time to catch up on all that paperwork, attend a continuing education workshop, or update your plan for the upcoming cropping season. And farmers, don't forget to file your Annual Implementation Reports with the department by March 1. The same holds true for our urban partners. Annual fertilizer reports describing nutrient applications made to turf in 2017 are due by March 1. With best wishes for a healthy and prosperous year.

Joe Bartenfelder
Maryland Agriculture
Secretary



Caption

Know the Rules:

WINTER NUTRIENT APPLICATION RESTRICTIONS NOW IN EFFECT



The Nutrient Management Program reminds farmers that the following nutrient application restrictions are in effect through February 28:

- Liquid manure sources generated on the farm must be stored in structures.
- Winter application of chemical fertilizer is prohibited until March 1. There are some exceptions for certain crops. Contact your nutrient management specialist or University of Maryland Extension for guidance.
- Farmers may apply organic sources to fields beginning March 1 as long as fields are not saturated, snow covered, or hard-frozen.
- Use of potash and liming materials is not restricted in winter.
- Manure deposited directly by livestock is not restricted any time of year.
- Smaller dairy operations with less than 50,000 lbs. of live animal weight are exempted from winter manure spreading restrictions until March 1, 2020.
- For more information, refer to the Maryland Nutrient Management Manual at: mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/nm_manual.aspx

EMERGENCY SPREADING OF MANURE



Vegetative cover is required.

The department is authorized to work with farmers to prevent overflows from storage structures in winter. In these instances, farmers must contact the Nutrient Management Program for authorization *before* any spreading takes place. The department will work with farmers to address storage issues in a way that minimizes impacts to water quality. Prior authorization also assists the department in responding to citizen complaints about manure. Once authorized, here are the rules for emergency spreading of manure in winter:

- A 100 ft. setback from surface waters is required.
- Manure must be applied to fields with vegetative cover (small grains, established hay fields and pastures, etc.).
- Farmers must contact their nutrient management consultant to adjust their spring fertility application rates for fields receiving emergency winter manure applications.
- Farmers requesting emergency winter spreading are required to enter into an agreement of intent with their local soil conservation district to evaluate winter storage options for their operations.
- Other restrictions may apply. **Questions?** Contact the Nutrient Management Program at 410-841-5959.

STACK IT RIGHT

Temporary field stockpiling of all stackable organic nutrient sources, including on-farm generated nutrients and imported nutrient sources (poultry litter, spent mushroom soil, compost, etc.) with 60 percent or less moisture content is allowed only when all other storage options are unavailable. Farmers are required to keep accurate records for manure stockpiles including the date started, tonnage, location, and date land-applied or transferred. Stockpiled manure may be spread on fields beginning March 1 based on the farm's nutrient management plan.

Here are the rules:

- Manure storage structures should be completely utilized before starting a stockpile.
- Manure in temporary stockpiles must be land applied no later than the first spring following the placement of the stockpile.
- The stockpile must be stacked at least 6 feet high and peaked to



allow it to shed rainfall. **Never dump poultry litter or any other nutrient source by truckload across fields!**

- The stockpile area must be:
 - At least 100 feet from any surface water and irrigation or treatment ditches, or 35 feet away if a vegetative buffer is in place;
 - At least 150 feet from wells, springs, and wetlands;
 - At least 300 feet from a well that is down gradient from the stockpile;
 - At least 200 feet from any residence outside the operator’s property;
 - Outside flood prone areas and areas prone to ponding; and
 - No farther than 150 feet from the top of a 3 percent slope with no diversion installed.
- Once the stockpile is removed, thoroughly scrape or clean the ground and restore the area to its original condition. If necessary, reseed the area with grass or a crop.
- **Questions?** Contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter.



Manure Transport Grants Ready for Action

Just in time for spring planting, the Manure Transport Program has made several changes that reduce paperwork and make it easier for farmers to apply for grants to move dairy and other non-poultry manures. Receiving farm fields are required to have an average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value of 100 or less. To save time and cut red tape, the program will provide cost-share grants for manure transport based on the following maximum application rates:

- 6,000 gallons per acre for liquid/slurry manure
- 10 tons per acre for solid/semi-solid manure

As always, farmers must follow their nutrient management plans. For more information, contact your soil conservation district, or visit mda.maryland.gov/manure and scroll down the right column to *Manure Resources*. Applications for our new 48-hour *Fast Track* grants to move poultry litter also are available on the web page.

FIRST GROUP OF FARMS TRANSITIONING TO PMT

The first group of farms has begun transitioning to the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT). This highly advanced tool identifies areas at risk for phosphorus runoff and prescribes management practices that assure water quality protection.

The group includes approximately 100 operations managing 11,000 acres of land with high soil phosphorus levels. The department is monitoring progress to make certain that farmers have the support and resources they need to make the transition, which in some instances may impact the use of manure as a crop fertilizer.

Following is the PMT phase-in schedule for the remaining groups:

2019—Medium risk group begins transition (average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value of 300-450).

2020—Low risk group begins transition (average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value of 150-299).

2022—PMT is fully implemented by all tier groups.



DON'T FORGET... AIRs DUE MARCH 1ST

Annual Implementation Reporting Forms (AIRs) describing nutrient applications made in 2017 are due **March 1, 2018**. Reporting forms and instructions were mailed in January and are available online at mda.maryland.gov under “Hot Topics.”

Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) operating under a permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment submit one combined Annual Reporting Form along with a manure analysis.

Tips for completing the Annual Reporting Form:

- Use the pre-filled form that was mailed to you.
- Do not leave spaces blank. If nutrients were not applied, place a zero in the box.
- If the information requested does not apply, write N/A in the box.
- Use the pre-printed envelope provided to mail the form by March 1. Affix proper postage.
- Failure to submit an Annual Reporting Form may result in fines and loss of eligibility to receive cost-share funds.

Did You Know?

Farming with an expired nutrient management plan is the top reason why farmers fail their farm audits. Do yourself a favor. Check the expiration date on your plan. Many plans are written for one year. Some plans are written for a specific growing season(s) and may need to be updated sooner.

Urban Update



Annual Fertilizer Application Reports Due March 1

Annual Fertilizer Application Reports outlining total nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium applied to turf and compiled by county are due to the department by March 1. The forms were mailed to all license holders in January. Additional forms may be downloaded at mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer.

Recertification Training

Professional Fertilizer Applicators are required to complete two hours of continuing education each year in order to renew their certifications. Check out the Training Calendar on page 5 for the latest classes and visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer to register.

Fact Check—Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer Products

- Enhanced efficiency fertilizers must be registered with the Maryland State Chemist before they may be applied to turf as a slow release product.
- The State Chemist maintains a list of registered products on its website at: mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/state_chemist_reports.aspx
- To find out if a product is registered and approved as an enhanced efficiency fertilizer, click on the PDF link labeled “Fertilizers.”
- Products are approved and registered annually with the State Chemist. The list may change from year to year, so check the dates listed at the top of the PDF.
- If you are unsure whether a product can be used as an enhanced efficiency fertilizer, contact the State Chemist for written verification at 410-841-2721.

Update Your Email Address

The urban program relies mainly on email to communicate with professional fertilizer applicators and businesses. To update your contact information, please visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer and click on the link to *Update Your Contact Information* in the upper right.

Questions?

Judy McGowan, *Urban Nutrient Management Specialist*
410-841-5955 or judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov

Training Calendar

AGRICULTURAL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Update Your Nutrient Management Plan Workshops

University of Maryland Extension nutrient management specialists will be available to help farm operators update their nutrient management plans for the upcoming cropping season.

Various Dates	February, March and April 2018
Locations	Various
Who Should Attend	Farmers who are certified to prepare and update nutrient management plans for their own operations.
Register	Paul Shipley, University of Maryland Extension, 301-405-2563 or prs@umd.edu

Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training and Recertification

The department and the University of Maryland Extension offer free voucher training and renewal courses for farm operators who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland. The two-hour course is required once every three years. Register at your local Extension office.

Locations	Anne Arundel County—March 13, call 410-222-3906
	Baltimore County—March 7, call 410-887-8090
	Caroline County—February 21, call 410-479-4030
	Carroll County—February 22, call 410-386-2760
	Frederick County—February 28, call 301-600-1594
	Queen Anne's County—March 2, call 410-758-0166
	Talbot County—March 6, call 410-822-1244

Farmer Certification Workshops

Various Dates	March – April 2018
Location	Baltimore City Extension Office
Who Should Attend	This program trains CSAs and growers for farmers' markets with small intensive food production operations to develop nutrient management plans for their own operations.

Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line

Ongoing	Many educational programs qualify for Maryland Nutrient Management continuing education credit. Even if you can't attend a webinar session "live," you might be able to earn continuing education credits at a later date.
Register Online	Visit mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to training classes.

TURFGRASS NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

Date	April 18, 2018
Location	MDA Headquarters, Annapolis
Who Should Attend	Individuals who want to take the exam to become certified to apply fertilizer to lawns that they manage. An optional training session is available.

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Offerings

Dates	February 27, 2018	Montgomery County Extension Office
	March 13, 2018	MDA Headquarters, Annapolis
	March 27, 2018	Montgomery County Extension Office
	April 19, 2017	MDA Headquarters, Annapolis
	April 24, 2018	Allegany County Fairgrounds
	April 30, 2018	Montgomery County Extension Office
	June 21, 2018	WEBINAR
Who Should Attend	Individuals who are currently certified by the department. The class satisfies the two-hour continuing education requirement for recertification.	
Register Online	Visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer . Check back often for new offerings.	

HEALTHY SOILS GOOD FOR BOTTOM LINE

On-farm case studies conducted by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and Datu Research determined that corn and soybean farmers who use cover crops and/or no-till practices can improve their bottom lines by over \$100 per acre. According to the research, four farmers in the Upper Mississippi River Basin found that using management practices that improve soil health can:

- Cut fertilizer costs by up to \$50/acre;
 - Cut erosion repair costs by up to \$16/acre; and
 - Increase yields by up to \$76/acre.
- To learn more about the study visit: nacdnet.org/soil-health-research

MDA AWARDED \$1 MILLION GRANT

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has secured a five-year, \$1 million Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant from the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to promote the latest technological advances in soil health. The Maryland grant will move the state beyond its robust Cover Crop Program to promote a variety of healthy soil practices that allow farmers to gain experience using the latest technological advances. Under this grant, soil conservation districts in Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties will provide technical assistance to farmers to test state-of-the-art practices such as variable rate nutrient application equipment and edge-of-field tools to reduce nutrient loss and improve soil health.



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

Nutrient Management Program

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mda.maryland.gov

Larry Hogan, Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Joseph Bartenfelder, Secretary

Julianne A. Oberg, Deputy Secretary



IMPORTANT

Proof of NM Plan now required for state cost-share. *See story on page 1.*

Maryland Department of Agriculture Nutrient Management Offices

Western Maryland

Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties

12407 Naves Cross Road, NE
Cumberland, MD 21502
Contact: Keith Potter, 301-777-1747, ext. 3507
or keith.potter@maryland.gov

Carroll and Frederick counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
Frederick, MD 21702
Contact: Moana Himes, 301-695-2803, ext. 8604
or moana.himes@maryland.gov

Central and Southern Maryland

Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
Frederick, MD 21702
Contact: Moana Himes, 301-695-2803, ext. 8604
or moana.himes@maryland.gov

Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties

3525 Conowingo Road, Suite 500
Street, MD 21154
Contact: Darren Alles, 410-638-4828, ext. 5220
or darren.alles@maryland.gov

Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties

26737 Radio Station Way, Suite B
Leonardtown, MD 20650
Contact: Weylin Anderson, 301-475-8402,
ext. 6410 or weylin.anderson@maryland.gov

Eastern Shore

Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties

28577 Mary's Court, Suite 4
Easton, MD 21601
Contact: Howard Callahan, 410-822-8126
or howard.callahan@maryland.gov

Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties

27722 Nanticoke Road, Unit 2
Salisbury, MD 21801
Contact: Steven Dorsey, 410-677-0802, ext. 4
or steve.dorsey@maryland.gov

What's Inside:

- ▶ Proof of a Current Nutrient Management Plan Now Required for Cost-Share
- ▶ Annual Implementation Reports Due March 1
- ▶ Winter Nutrient Application Restrictions in Effect
- ▶ What Lawn Care Pros Need to Know about Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizers

Maryland Nutrient Management News is published by the Maryland Nutrient Management Program. It is designed to help farmers, consultants, and lawn care professionals comply with Maryland's nutrient management regulations. Comments and suggestions should be directed to the Maryland Nutrient Management Program, Maryland Department of Agriculture. Email nminfo.mda@maryland.gov or call 410-841-5959.

