



Winter 2015

Maryland



Nutrient Management News

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY HANCE

By now, most farmers are aware that at the direction of Governor Martin O'Malley, MDA has proposed regulations to implement a phased in Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT). The regulations were published in the *Maryland Register* on December 1 and open for comment through December 31, 2014. We understand that the PMT is a high priority for the incoming Hogan administration and is one of the first policy issues they have said they will take up. We anticipate changes and MDA will keep farmers informed of PMT developments as they unfold. Visit our website at mda.maryland.gov for updates.

Maryland and the other Bay jurisdictions are required to implement nutrient reduction strategies outlined in their federally approved Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs). Here in Maryland, farmers who complete their Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs) help to document agriculture's ongoing progress in protecting the Bay and its tributaries from nutrient runoff. AIR questions concerning manure storage structure characteristics and innovative management practices such as manure injection, acres under conservation tillage, and management using GPS provide MDA with data that can be used to document best management practices on Maryland farms. These practices count toward achieving Maryland's agricultural WIP goals for improving Bay water quality.

It is imperative that all Maryland farmers complete their AIRs honestly, accurately and on time so that MDA can fully account for everything that agriculture is doing to reduce nutrient loads to the Bay. If you have questions or need help completing your AIR, please contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter.

Maryland farmers are national leaders in conservation efforts. The progress

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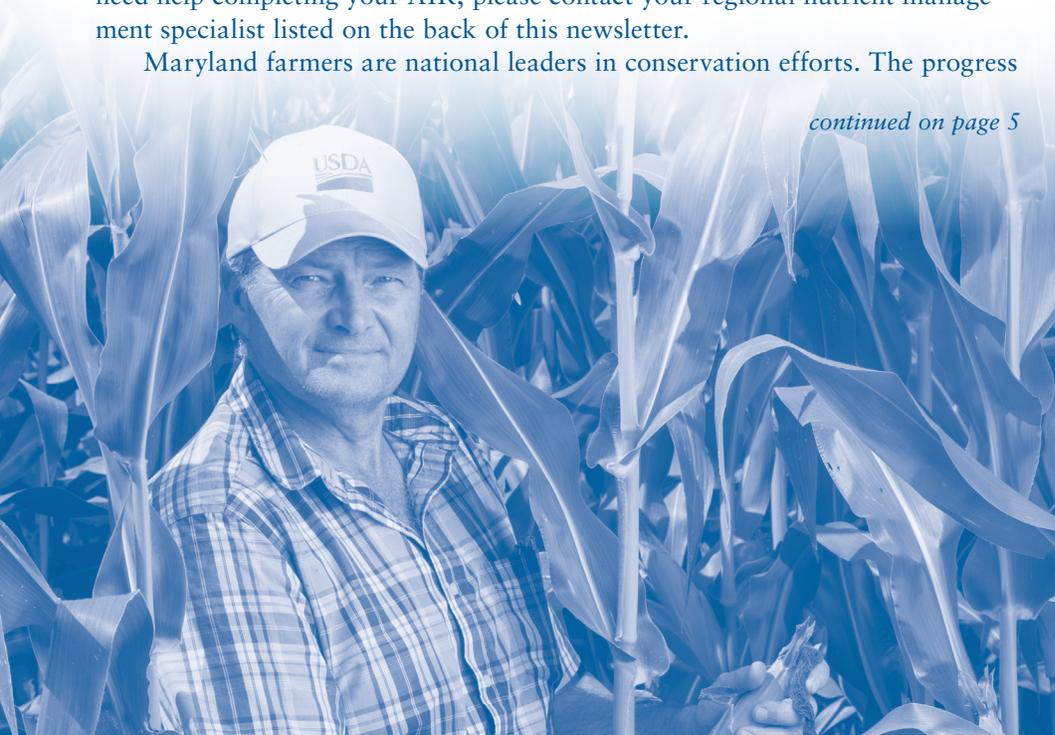


AIRs IN THE MAIL: DUE TO MDA MARCH 1

Annual Implementation Reporting Forms (AIRs) were mailed to all eligible farmers earlier this month. The forms describe how farmers implemented their nutrient management plans during calendar year 2014. They are due to MDA by March 1, 2015.

The reporting content for the 2014 AIR is similar to last year, however, the form has been reformatted to make it easier to read with additional space for reporting total pounds of available nutrients applied. Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) covered under a permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) submit one combined AIR/CAFO Reporting Form to MDA. CAFOs must also submit a manure analysis with their combined

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NEW 48-HOUR FAST TRACK APPLICATION AVAILABLE FOR POULTRY LITTER TRANSPORT

Poultry farmers with litter to haul in a hurry should check out MDA's new 48-hour *Fast Track* application for Manure Transport grants. *Fast Track* makes the grant application process faster and easier for farmers who are transporting and land applying poultry litter. Farmers complete a shortened form that can be processed in as little as 48 hours once it's received by MDA.

Under the Fast Track process, MDA will:

- Check nutrient management and MACS compliance
- Perform an animal health check
- Verify the poultry company contract with the sending poultry operation

If approved, MDA will issue a conditional approval that allows the poultry litter to be transported. Applicants assume risk for meeting all other eligibility requirements. Additional restrictions apply.

Questions? Contact your soil conservation district or visit mda.maryland.gov/manure.



HAS YOUR NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN EXPIRED?

Expired nutrient management plans are one of the chief reasons farmers are cited for non-compliance with nutrient management regulations. Don't set yourself up for failure. Follow these three rules to step into compliance. Keep in mind that winter is an excellent time to work on your nutrient management plan.

1. Check the cover sheet that came with your nutrient management plan. It should include a beginning and ending date for your plan. Many plans are written for one year.
2. Make sure that required soil tests are less than 3 years old.
3. If you use manure, make certain that it is analyzed for nutrient content at least every other year.



STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Spreading manure on frozen or snow covered fields increases the risk of nutrient runoff and fecal contamination of nearby streams and rivers. Beginning July 1, 2016, farmers with 50,000 lbs. or more of combined live animal weight will be prohibited from applying manure to fields in winter. Smaller operations have until March 1, 2020 to comply. Now is the time to start planning for this requirement.

Storage structures help farmers manage manure that accumulates over the winter. Farmers can receive up to \$200,000 per project and \$300,000 per farm from the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program to construct animal waste management systems. Free technical and financial help is available through local soil conservation districts (SCDs).

JUMP START YOUR SPRING PLANTING

Grants will be offered again this spring to help farmers cover the cost of injecting or incorporating manure or other eligible organic products into cropland as required by Maryland's nutrient management regulations. Grants may be used to hire custom operators and rent or lease vertical tillage or secondary tillage equipment. Participation is limited to farmers who have not used eligible equipment for incorporation or injection of manure from October 15, 2007 to October 15, 2012. Details will be posted on the MDA website in upcoming weeks.

MDE RENEWS CAFO/MAFO PERMIT; FARMERS SHOULD REAPPLY NOW

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reissued its General Discharge (GD) Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and Maryland Animal Feeding Operations (MAFOs). The permit covers all medium and large operations with at least 37,500 chickens with dry manure handling or at least 25,000 layers with dry manure handling. Here is what farmers need to know and do:

- Operations registered under the previous GD Permit who notified MDE by September 30, 2014 that they intend to renew their coverage must send MDE a new Notice of Intent (NOI) by **January 30, 2015**. The new NOI form, effective December 1, 2014 is available on MDE's website. This action assures that these operations will be covered by their existing permit until MDE can process the new NOI.
- Operations registered under the previous GD Permit who did not notify MDE that they intend to renew their coverage, must submit a new NOI **immediately**. MDE will note that these operations have submitted a NOI, but coverage will not begin until the new NOI is processed.
- New or proposed CAFO/MAFOs, must send the new NOI and required plans to MDE **immediately**. MDE will note that these operations have submitted a NOI, but permit coverage will not begin until the NOI is processed.
- Existing CAFO/MAFOs not registered under the previous GD Permit, must send MDE a NOI **immediately**. These operations will not be covered until MDE processes the NOI.

Under the new GD Permit both CAFOs and MAFOs are required to implement either a current comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) or a combination of a current state nutrient management plan (NMP) and a Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan. The renewed permit includes reduced annual permit fees for CAFOs. MAFOs do not pay fees.

- Large CAFO fee reduced from \$1,200 to \$800
- Medium CAFO fee reduced from \$600 to \$300
- Small CAFO fee reduced from \$120 to \$60

For more information, including live links to the NOI form and the GD permit, visit mde.maryland.gov. Select Land from the left menu bar, then click Waste Diversion and scroll to Animal Feeding Operations from the drop down menu. Questions? Contact Gary Kelman at 410-537-4423 or gary.kelman@maryland.gov.

HARRIS NAMED IMPLEMENTATION COORDINATOR

Long time Nutrient Management Specialist Bryan Harris has been named Implementation Coordinator for the Nutrient Management Program. In his new position, Harris will oversee both the agricultural and turfgrass nutrient management programs. Harris joined MDA in 2002 as a nutrient management specialist serving farmers in Frederick, Carroll, Howard, and Montgomery counties. He can be reached at 410-841-5959 or bryan.harris@maryland.gov.



Farmers Set Cover Crop Enrollment Record

Farmers signed up to plant a remarkable 631,374 acres of cover crops on their fields last fall. The previous record was 608,427 acres.

AGRICULTURAL ENFORCEMENT ROUNDUP

Here is a roundup of program compliance and enforcement actions for Fiscal Year 2014, the period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

Nutrient Management Plans

By the end of the fiscal year, 98.6 percent of the state's 5,426 regulated farms had submitted their initial nutrient management plans to MDA as required Maryland's nutrient management regulations. MDA is pursuing enforcement actions against 75 operators who have failed to meet this requirement. Eleven farmers were fined a total of \$3,850 for failure to file an initial nutrient management plan with MDA.

Annual Implementation Reports

As of June 30, 2014, 97.9 percent of regulated farmers managing about 1.3 million acres of land had submitted their 2013 AIRs to MDA. During the year, MDA issued \$23,250 in fines against 93 farmers for late or missing AIRs.

On-Farm Audits and Inspections

MDA conducted 733 on-farm audits in Fiscal Year 2014, representing about 14 percent of regulated farms. During these visits, specialists verified that nutrient management plans were current, examined fertilizer receipts and nutrient application records for consistency with plans, and confirmed that farmers used plans to manage nutrients effectively. Specialists issued 211 warnings to correct major violations and documented minor violations to be corrected. Follow-up visits determined that 66 percent of the operators had come into compliance, with the remaining operators progressing through the enforcement process.



URBAN UPDATE

Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law directed MDA to establish a certification and licensing program for lawn care professionals hired to apply fertilizer to lawns and other grassy areas that they manage. To date, MDA, in cooperation with University of Maryland Extension, area businesses, and trade organizations, has conducted 82 pre-certification training sessions across the state to prepare turfgrass professionals for the certification exam. As of December 1, 2014, 1,330 Professional Fertilizer Applicator certificates have been issued to qualified individuals. In addition, 659 business licenses have been issued. MDA maintains a list of certified professionals at mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer.

- **Annual Fertilizer Application Reports Due March 1**—License holders are required to file an Annual Fertilizer Application Report outlining total nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium applied to turf by county. The reports are due to MDA by March 1. Reporting forms and instructions were mailed to all license holders in January 2015. They also are available online at mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer. Questions? Contact judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov or kelly.love@maryland.gov.
- **Certification and Continuing Education**—MDA will offer certification exams in February and March for professionals seeking first time certifications at its headquarters building. In addition, a number of continuing education classes will be offered statewide for professionals seeking to renew their certifications for 2015-2016. Visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer for a complete list of exam dates and continuing education classes.
- **Enforcement**—In Fiscal Year 2014, MDA conducted 16 reviews of turf managers' fertilizer records to assess compliance. Two warnings were issued; one for over-application of nitrogen and the other for missing fertilizer application records.

TRAINING CALENDAR

AGRICULTURAL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training and Recertification

MDA and University of Maryland Extension offer free voucher training and renewal courses to farm operators who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland. The two-hour course is required once every three years. Classes are offered in fall and winter. Visit mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to voucher training classes.

Farmer Certification Workshop

This two-day workshop is for farmers who want to become certified to write nutrient management plans for their own operations. The workshop consists of about 11 hours of classroom lecture and practice in writing plans.

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| Operation Type | Crop Operations that Use Manure and Fertilizer |
| Day Classes | February 10 and February 23, 2015 |
| Location | University of Maryland Extension—Washington County Office |

Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line

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| Ongoing | Many educational programs qualify for 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. |
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How to Register

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| On the web | Visit mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to training classes. |
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TURFGRASS NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

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| Who Should Attend | Individuals who want to become certified to apply fertilizer to lawns that they manage. Optional training sessions are available. |
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| Dates | February 12, February 25, March 9, or March 23, 2015 |
| Location | MDA Headquarters, Annapolis |

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Offerings

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| Who Should Attend | Individuals who are currently certified by MDA. The class satisfies the two-hour continuing education requirement for recertification. |
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| Dates | February 9, February 23, March 10, or March 26, 2015 |
| Location | MDA Headquarters, Annapolis |

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| Date | February 11, 2015 |
| Location | Frederick County Extension Office |

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|----------|----------------------------------|
| Dates | February 24 or March 3, 2015 |
| Location | Wicomico County Extension Office |

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| Date | March 17, 2015 |
| Location | Montgomery County Extension Office |

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|----------|----------------------|
| Date | March 25, 2015 |
| Location | Cumberland, Maryland |

How to Register

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| On the web | Visit mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to training classes. |
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Secretary's Message cont. from page 1

we have made in achieving our Chesapeake Bay milestone commitments is all attributable to your hard work and dedication. Your steadfast stewardship efforts have installed more than 4,200 conservation projects over the past seven years—more than the previous two decades combined. Maryland farmers are now planting more than 400,000 acres of cover crops each year, which is one of the most cost-effective things that we can do to keep nitrogen and phosphorus out of the waters of the Bay.

The past seven years have been such a tremendous opportunity. I am honored to have met so many good people and I've learned so much. I believe that Maryland farmers are the strongest, best farmers in the world. We have overcome countless challenges and never give up. Because of that, I know the future for Maryland agriculture is and will continue to be bright and prosperous.



Buddy Hance
Maryland Agriculture Secretary

AIRs in the Mail cont. from page 1

form. Here are some tips to keep in mind when completing the 2014 AIR:

- When possible, use the pre-filled form that was mailed to you. Fillable forms and instructions are also available at mda.maryland.gov.
- Do not leave any spaces blank. If no nutrients were applied, write "none applied" or place a zero in the box.
- If information requested does not apply to your operation, write N/A in the box.
- Complete all information requested.
- Use the envelope provided to mail the AIR to your regional nutrient management office by the March 1 deadline. Don't forget to stamp the envelope.
- Failure to submit an AIR may result in fines and/or loss of eligibility to receive MDA cost-share funds.



Maryland Department of Agriculture
Office of Resource Conservation
Nutrient Management Program
 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
 Annapolis, MD 21401
 mda.maryland.gov



Martin O'Malley, *Governor*
 Anthony G. Brown, *Lt. Governor*
 Earl F. Hance, *Secretary*
 Mary Ellen Setting, *Deputy Secretary*

Maryland Department of Agriculture
Nutrient Management Regional Offices

Western MD

Allegheny, Garrett and Washington counties
 12407 Naves Cross Road, NE
 Cumberland, MD 21502
 Contact: Keith Potter, 301-777-1747, ext. 3 or
 keith.potter@maryland.gov

Frederick County
 92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
 Frederick, MD 21702
 Contact: Keith Potter, 1-800-492-5590, ext. 5951 or
 keith.potter@maryland.gov

Carroll, Howard and Montgomery counties
 92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
 Frederick, MD 21702
 Contact: (John) Adam Lyon, 1-800-492-5590,
 ext. 5949 or adam.lyon@maryland.gov

Central MD

Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties
 19 Newport Drive, Suite 106
 Forest Hill, MD 21050
 Contact: Darren Alles, 410-838-6181, ext. 118 or
 darren.alles@maryland.gov

Southern MD

Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties
 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Suite 201
 Annapolis, MD 21401
 Contact: (John) Adam Lyon 410-841-5959 or
 adam.lyon@maryland.gov

Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties
 26737 Radio Station Way, Suite B
 Leonardtown, MD 20650
 Contact: Weylin Anderson, 301-475-8402, ext.122 or
 weylin.anderson@maryland.gov

Eastern Shore

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

Caroline and Dorchester counties
 28577 Mary's Court, Suite 4
 Easton, MD 21601
 Contact: Dan Schwanning, 410-822-8120 or
 dan.schwanning@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

Nutrient Management Notes

▶ HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please help us keep your contact information up-to-date. Call your regional nutrient management office with address, email or telephone changes as soon as possible.

▶ SUBSCRIBE TO MARYLAND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT NEWS ON-LINE

Save paper and be the first to know. Email nminfo.mda@maryland.gov to receive email notification of the latest issue of *Maryland Nutrient Management News*. Give your full name and preferred email address.

Maryland Nutrient Management News is published by the Maryland Nutrient Management Program. It is designed to help farmers 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, 410-841-5959 or nminfo.mda@maryland.gov.

