



# Nutrient Management News

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

WINTER 2021

## Reporting Forms DUE MARCH 1



### Online Reporting Option Now Available

Farmers and turfgrass pros have until March 1 to submit their annual implementation reports (AIRs) and fertilizer application reports (AFARs) to the department. These reports can now be submitted online through **Maryland OneStop**.

Following through on Governor Larry Hogan's promise to improve access to government services, **Maryland OneStop** serves as a central hub for licenses, forms, certificates, permits, applications, and registrations from across the state's many agencies and departments.

E-filing offers many advantages over paper including faster processing time, less errors—it does the calculations for you!—and delivery confirmation. Follow the directions on **page 4** to set up your **Maryland OneStop** account. For those who want to continue to submit paper reports, a mail-in option remains available this year at [mda.maryland.gov](http://mda.maryland.gov). *Either way, all reports are due March 1.*



## Message from Secretary Bartenfelder

On December 14, 2020, the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) Advisory Committee voted overwhelmingly to proceed with the planned schedule for the PMT. I agree with their assessment. The PMT will move toward full implementation on July 1, 2021.



The department continues to identify new opportunities that provide farmers, producers and allied industries with needed resources during this transition. Earlier this year, MDA outlined a series of initiatives to address priorities identified by a study conducted by BEACON at Salisbury University. This process is ongoing, and we welcome input and ideas from the industry and stakeholders.

The Hogan-Rutherford Administration remains committed to the protection and enhancement of our waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. The PMT is an integral part of our efforts to reduce nutrient runoff. Maryland agriculture is often viewed as the standard bearer for resource conservation and sustainable farming practices, and we look forward to continuing that legacy.

With best wishes for a safe, healthy and productive 2021.

*Joseph Bartenfelder*

Joe Bartenfelder  
Maryland Agriculture Secretary

## Scheduled Phase-In of the PMT Moves Forward

Maryland farmers with soil phosphorus levels that call for the use of the Phosphorus Management Tool to enhance water quality protection should continue to follow the current implementation schedule that is in place. These farmers have Soil Phosphorus Fertility Index Values of **150 or greater**. Here are the guidelines:

- Updated nutrient management plans should be developed based on Phosphorus Management Tool calculations.
- Phosphorus applications are incrementally lowered during the phase-in period.
- All three tier groups —A, B and C—have until **July 1, 2021** to fully transition to the PMT.
- Questions? Contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter.





## Urban Update

### Fertilizer Blackout Dates in Effect

Maryland's lawn fertilizer blackout dates are now in effect. Lawns may not be fertilized with products containing nitrogen or phosphorus during the blackout dates. Potassium and lime may still be applied, since they are not considered a threat to water quality. Fertilizer applications containing N and P may be resumed March 1, 2021 as long as the ground is not frozen or heavy rain is not predicted.

### Fertilizer Reports Due by March 1

Annual Fertilizer Application Reports (AFARs) summarizing total nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium applied to turf are **due by March 1**. New this year, businesses can e-file their annual fertilizer reports using **Maryland OneStop**. Follow the instructions on page 4 to set up your account. Not ready to e-file? Go to [mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer](http://mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer) to download a paper reporting form.

### No Contact Fertilizer Record Reviews

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, all fertilizer record reviews will be conducted electronically until further notice. We will work with businesses to find other non-contact solutions if electronic submission of fertilizer records is not feasible.

### New CEU Cycle

A new three-year continuing education credit cycle took effect July 1, 2020. Professional fertilizer applicators are now required to earn six continuing education credits within a three-year cycle. The current

cycle ends June 30, 2023. Credits may not be carried over into the next three-year cycle. Professional Turfgrass Fertilizer Applicator Certificates still need to be renewed yearly for a \$100 fee and verification of compliance with continuing education requirements.

### Exams Suspended Until Spring

Professional Fertilizer Applicator exams have been suspended for the winter due to Covid-19 safety concerns. Exams will resume in the spring when testing can be performed outdoors. If you are interested in taking the exam, email [judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov](mailto:judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov) and you will be notified by email when new exams are scheduled.

### Online Recertification Seminars

Until further notice, all MDA-sponsored recertification seminars will be held online. Please see the Training Calendar for dates.

### Questions?

Contact Judy McGowan at [judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov](mailto:judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov) or 410-980-9084.

## BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT



## Manure Injection

This practice offers big rewards for farmers who want to cut down on odors, soil erosion and nutrient losses when spreading manure. Special equipment is used to inject all types of liquid manure below the soil surface instead of spreading it on top. The practice works well with no-till and strip-till systems.

State cost-share funding of up to \$45 an acre is available to hire custom operators, rent or lease equipment, or offset operating costs associated with manure injection. Contact your local soil conservation district to apply for these grants. Work can begin March 1 as long as the ground is not frozen or snow covered.

## Farmers: Get a Load of This!

Maryland's **FastTrack** grants now pay up to \$22.50 per ton to haul poultry manure to qualifying farms. **FastTrack** grants make it easy to switch to poultry manure to build healthy soils and save on commercial fertilizer costs. Here's how they work:

- You arrange for manure delivery and pay the costs up front.
- You will be reimbursed for eligible costs—up to \$22.50 per ton.
- The website has everything you need to make the switch, including a list of manure brokers and custom spreading services.

Farmers with qualifying fields (soil phosphorus levels below MD P-FIV 101) should visit [mda.maryland.gov/manure](http://mda.maryland.gov/manure) or call 410-841-5864 to get started.



IN EFFECT THROUGH FEBRUARY 28

# Winter Manure Restrictions



*All livestock operations—regardless of size—are prohibited from spreading manure on fields in winter.*

## What Not To Do...

- Do not apply organic nutrient sources to fields before **March 1**.
- Do not apply organic nutrient sources if fields are saturated, snow covered, or hard-frozen.
- Do not apply chemical fertilizer before March 1. There are exceptions to this rule. Please contact your regional nutrient management specialist or University of Maryland Extension advisor for guidance.

## What To Do...

- Do store liquid manure sources generated on the farm in structures.
- Do apply potash and liming materials, if needed.

## Did You Know?

- Manure deposited directly by livestock is not restricted.
- Spreading can resume March 1 as long as fields are not frozen or snow covered.
- Maryland's winter manure spreading restrictions apply to all livestock operations—large and small. Farmers should contact their soil conservation district to discuss storage solutions, if needed.
- Learn more at: [bit.ly/NM\\_Manual](https://bit.ly/NM_Manual)

## Emergency Winter Spreading Needs Approval

Spreading manure in winter is not allowed in Maryland. If winter spreading becomes unavoidable, call 410-841-5959 *before any spreading takes place*. The department will work with you to prevent overflows from storage structures and minimize impacts to water quality. Stackable solids may not be applied to fields in winter, but temporary stockpiling is allowed for solid manures.

## Rules for Temporary Stockpiles

Temporary field stockpiling of chicken litter and other “stackable” organic nutrient sources (60 percent or less moisture content) is allowed *only* when all other storage options are unavailable. *Here are the rules:*

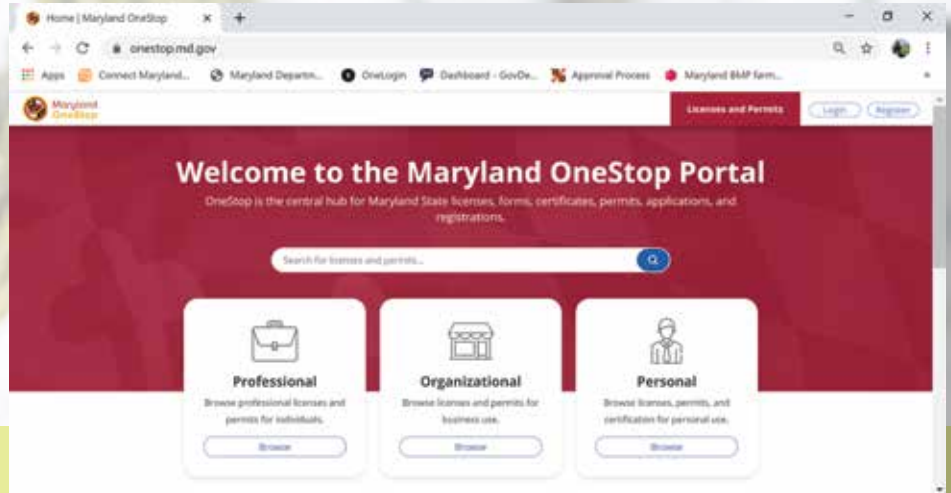
- Stack the stockpile at least 6 feet high with a peak to allow it to shed rainfall.
- Make certain that the stockpile area is:
  - At least 100 feet from surface water and irrigation or treatment ditches
  - At least 35 feet away if a vegetative buffer is in place
  - At least 150 feet from wells, springs, and wetlands
  - At least 300 feet from wells that are downhill from the stockpile
  - At least 200 feet from homes not on the operator's property
  - Outside flood prone areas and areas prone to ponding
  - No farther than 150 feet from the top of a 3 percent slope with no diversion
- Spread stockpiled manure on fields no earlier than March 1 the first spring after the stockpile was created. Follow your nutrient management plan.
- After the stockpile is removed, thoroughly scrape or clean the ground and restore the area to its original condition.
- Reseed the area with grass or a crop.

# SIGN UP FOR Maryland OneStop

## AIRs and AFARs: DUE MARCH 1

Farmers and turfgrass professionals now have the option to e-file annual implementation reports (AIRs) and turfgrass fertilizer application reports (AFARs) electronically using Maryland OneStop. Simply follow the directions on this page to set up your account.

For those who want to continue to submit paper reports, a mail-in option remains available this year. Paper forms were mailed earlier this month and can be downloaded from the website at: [mda.maryland.gov](http://mda.maryland.gov)



### First, You Need to Register for an Account:



- 1 Go to: [onestop.md.gov](http://onestop.md.gov)
- 2 Click on the "Register" button in the upper right corner.
- 3 Enter your first and last name and email address. Create and confirm your password to register.
- 4 Once you have registered for an account you will receive an email that asks you to verify your email address. To complete the registration process click the "Verify Your Email" button.
- 5 After you have verified your email address, you will be able to log onto [onestop.md.gov](http://onestop.md.gov) using the email address and the password you set.

### FOR FARMERS *and* TURFGRASS PROS How to Submit Your Annual Implementation Report (AIR) or Annual Fertilizer Application Report (AFAR):

- 1 Go to: [onestop.md.gov](http://onestop.md.gov)
- 2 Log into your account.
- 3 **FARMERS:** Type "AIR" in the search box on the home page.  
**TURFGRASS PROS:** Type "AFAR" in the search box.
- 4 Select the AIR (farmers) or AFAR (turfgrass pros) from the search results.
- 5 Click the "Apply Online" button and complete your AIR (farmers) or AFAR (turfgrass pros).

### FOR FARMERS *and* TURFGRASS PROS How to Complete the Reporting Form:

- 1 Once inside the reporting form, fill in the form fields.
- 2 Fields that require a response will be starred with a red asterisk. Responses will be validated to ensure accuracy.
- 3 Add your e-signature in the space provided on the last page of the form.
- 4 Carefully read the certification affirmation before adding your e-signature. You may type or draw your e-signature in the box.

### How to Track the Status of your Submitted Report:

- 1 Check your OneStop dashboard to track your report's status.
- 2 If you are required to complete an action, you will see the report appear in the "Reports Requiring Your Action" table of your dashboard.
- 3 Questions? Please email: [onestop.support@maryland.gov](mailto:onestop.support@maryland.gov) or contact your regional nutrient management specialist.

# Training Calendar

## Agricultural Nutrient Management Program

### Maryland Crop Production Meetings

<b>Dates</b>	<i>Agronomy:</i> January 21, 2021, February 17, 2021, and February 26, 2021 <i>Forage:</i> January 14, 2021 and January 19, 2021 <i>Fruit Growers:</i> February 10, 2021 <i>Urban Farmers:</i> January 25, 2021 and January 31, 2021 <i>Vegetable Growers:</i> January 28, 2021
<b>Format</b>	Zoom Meeting
<b>Times</b>	Various; average length of meeting is 3-4 hours
<b>Who Should Attend</b>	Farmers and consultants who want the latest research and data to make informed 2021 growing decisions for agricultural crops. Attendance is free.
<b>Credits</b>	Qualifies for nutrient management voucher training and continuing education credits. Pesticide applicator and certified crop advisor credits are also offered.
<b>How to Register</b>	Visit <a href="http://extension.umd.edu/agriculture/winter-crop-production-meetings-2020-2021">extension.umd.edu/agriculture/winter-crop-production-meetings-2020-2021</a>

### How to Write a Nutrient Management Plan Workshop

<b>Dates</b>	March 8 – March 12, 2021
<b>Format</b>	Webinar
<b>Who Should Attend</b>	Certified consultants and farmers who want to learn how to write nutrient management plans using the NuMan Pro nutrient management planning software. Awards 6 continuing education credits to newly certified consultants.
<b>How to Register</b>	Visit <a href="http://mda.maryland.gov">mda.maryland.gov</a> and type "Nutrient Management Training" in the search box at the top of the page. Follow the link to training classes.

### Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line

<b>Ongoing</b>	Many education programs qualify for Maryland Nutrient Management continuing education credits. Even if you can't attend a webinar session "live," you might be able to earn continuing education credits at a later date.
<b>Register Online</b>	Visit <a href="http://mda.maryland.gov">mda.maryland.gov</a> and type "Nutrient Management Training" in the search box at the top of the page. Follow the link to training classes.

## Turfgrass Nutrient Management Program

### Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

<b>Dates</b>	All certification exams have been postponed until spring when they can be held safely outdoors.
<b>Website</b>	Visit <a href="http://mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer">mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer</a> for the latest updates.

### Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Classes

<b>Dates</b>	January 12, 2021, February 23, 2021, March 23, 2021, and May 10, 2021
<b>Format</b>	Zoom Meeting
<b>Who Should Attend</b>	Certified professional fertilizer applicators who need to renew their certifications.
<b>How to Register</b>	Visit <a href="http://mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer">mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer</a> for the latest updates.



## Need Buffers?

A new funding option is now available to farmers who want to plant streamside buffers on their farms to protect water quality.

Maryland's Conservation Buffer Initiative offers attractive incentive payments, a buffer option for field ditches, flexible site management, and shorter contract terms.

Three types of buffers are eligible for funding and free technical assistance under this pilot program: riparian forest buffers, grass buffers, and watercourse access control areas adjacent to pastures.

Apply for these grants January 11 through February 5, 2021. Go to: [bit.ly/MDA\\_Buffer](http://bit.ly/MDA_Buffer)

## Updated Soil Data Due in 2021

Maryland's Phosphorus Management Tool regulations require updated soil data to be submitted to the department once every six years. This data was last collected in 2015. In 2021, consultants and certified farmers will again need to report soil phosphorus Fertility Index Values (FIVs) for all fields covered by nutrient management plans that they have prepared. Instructions will be mailed in the spring. Questions? Email [bryan.harris@maryland.gov](mailto:bryan.harris@maryland.gov)



## Big Year for Cover Crops

Maryland farmers signed up to plant more than 640,000 acres of cover crops this fall during the Maryland Cover Crop Program's first ever mail-in enrollment. Getting those cover crops in the ground, however, proved challenging. Persistent rain and poor field conditions made planting a soggy business. By mid-December, soil conservation districts had certified 420,000 acres of cover crops with more fields to be counted.



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*  
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*  
Joseph Bartenfelder, *Secretary*  
Julianne A. Oberg, *Deputy Secretary*



Western Maryland

## Maryland Department of Agriculture Nutrient Management Offices

### Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties

P.O. Box 459  
Hancock, MD 21750  
Contact: Keith Potter, 410-279-3506 or  
keith.potter@maryland.gov

### Carroll and Frederick counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110  
Frederick, MD 21702  
Contact: Moana Himes, 410-353-4320 or  
moana.himes@maryland.gov

Central and Southern Maryland

### Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110  
Frederick, MD 21702  
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### Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties

P.O. Box 850  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
Contact: Darren Alles, 410-991-3114 or  
darren.alles@maryland.gov

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

P.O. Box 652  
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Contact: Weylin Anderson, 410-980-9479 or  
weylin.anderson@maryland.gov

Eastern Shore

### Caroline and Dorchester counties

P.O. Box 340  
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Contact: Steve Szelestei, 410-353-5660 or  
steve.szelestei@maryland.gov

### Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties

P.O. Box 549  
Cordova, MD 21625  
Contact: Howard Callahan, 410-279-4003 or  
howard.callahan@maryland.gov

### Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties

27722 Nanticoke Road, Unit 2  
Salisbury, MD 21801  
Contact: Robin Culver, 410-507-4949 or  
robin.culver@maryland.gov

## Nutrient Management COVID-19 Update:

### COVID-19 ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR FARMERS

- If you have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit our website for a list of state, federal and private financial assistance programs. Go to: [mda.maryland.gov/Pages/farmer-relief.aspx](http://mda.maryland.gov/Pages/farmer-relief.aspx)
- **We're still open!** To serve you better during temporary building closures, we have updated our mail and phone directories at left.
- To help stop the spread of COVID-19, **all farm audits and turfgrass fertilizer record reviews will be conducted electronically until further notice.** We will continue to work with farmers and business to find other "non-contact" solutions if electronic submission of required documents is impractical.
- **Continuing education classes have moved online for the time being.** Please note that all crop production meetings qualify for voucher and continuing education credits. As always, we will work with farmers who lack internet access. Contact your regional nutrient management specialist if you have questions or concerns.

**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](mailto:nminfo.mda@maryland.gov)

