AgNews

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Delaware DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE
Serving Agriculture and Protecting Consumers

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Attention Nutrient Handlers: Winter application of fertilizer and manure is regulated in Delaware

The Delaware Nutrient Management Commission (Commission) reminds Delaware farmers, lawn care companies, golf courses, and other nutrient handlers that the application of Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) nutrients during winter months is regulated. Regulations were approved by the Commission and became effective in 2007. The regulations limit the application of commercial and manure based fertilizer during the time of the year that is most vulnerable for nutrient runoff, i.e. the period between December 7 and February 15.

Certified nutrient handlers are limited in N and P fertilizer and manure applications as follows, unless otherwise specified in their nutrient management plan:

- The application may not occur between December 7 and February 15;
- The application may not occur on snow covered or frozen ground;
- The application may not occur on impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, roads and other paved areas and the misdirected fertilizer is not removed on the same day of application.

Bill Rohrer, Program Administrator, said, "A core nutrient management best management practice is to apply nutrients just prior to or during active plant growth. Most rain runoff events occur in the winter and spring so protecting fertilizer from these rain events is imperative."

Failure to comply with regulations may result in a compliance and enforcement hearing before the Commission.

For more information on Delaware's Nutrient Management regulations, contact the Delaware Department of Agriculture Nutrient Management Section:

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