

Nonpoint Source Management Program :: Neuse Nutrient Strategy: Nutrient Management Rule

What Does the Neuse River Nutrient Management Rule Say?

Like the Agriculture Rule, this rule was developed with a great deal of input from the affected parties. Many of the affected parties told us that educating people about nutrient management was at least as valuable as having a written nutrient management plan.

This rule applies to persons who apply fertilizer to or manage 50 or more acres of the following types of lands in a calendar year:

- Cropland (cropland covered by a certified animal waste management plan is exempt.)
- Golf courses
- Recreational lands
- Rights-of-way
- Lawns and gardens in residential, commercial or industrial areas
- Other turfgrass areas

DWQ has heard support for this rule because it has equitable requirements for many different types of nutrient applicators throughout the Neuse basin.

Each person affected by this rule has two options for meeting its requirements:

1. Complete training and continuing education in nutrient management; or
2. Develop a written nutrient management plan for all property where nutrients are applied.

Option 1: Nutrient Management Training

During the first year after the effective date of this rule, DWQ and the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service (CES), will conduct a sign-up process for persons wishing to take the nutrient management training. Applicators who choose to follow this option are required to complete the training within five years of the effective date of this rule.

Option 2: Nutrient Management Plans

If an affected person does not sign up for nutrient management training within one year after the effective date of the rule, then that person will be required to develop a nutrient management plan. The nutrient management plan must cover all of the lands where the applicator applies nutrients in a calendar year.

Nutrient management plans may be written by either the applicator or a consultant. These plans must be kept on-site or be producible within 24 hours of a request by DWQ.

Nutrient management plans must meet the following standards:

- **For cropland:** Standards and specifications of the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service or those set by the N.C. Soil and Water Conservation Commission.
- **For turfgrass:** N.C. State University's guidelines for turfgrass management or other applicable recommendations from land-grant universities.

- **For nurseries:** Southern Nurserymen's Association's guidelines or other applicable recommendations from land-grant universities.
- **For others:** Applicable recommendations from land-grant universities.

As this list shows, DWQ has utilized existing technical standards and guidelines for nutrient management on different types of lands.

Following either option under this rule will assist in meeting the nitrogen reduction goal on urban, rural and agricultural lands.