



DATCP Reminds Farmers to Check Runoff Risk Prior to Spreading Manure

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is reminding farmers and manure applicators to check the runoff risk advisory forecast before spreading manure on fields. This tool helps determine the potential for manure runoff from a field depending on weather conditions and soil temperature. Users can access this tool at <http://www.manureadvisorysystem.wi.gov/runoffrisk/index>.

The runoff risk advisory forecast includes maps showing short-term runoff risk for manure application. The maps account for soil saturation, temperature, and precipitation on a scale of 1.5 square-mile grids. The risk maps are updated four times daily with the latest information from the National Weather Service.

“When applying manure, it is important to have a nutrient management plan that accurately identifies appropriate application rates and locations for spreading,” said Mark Witecha, DATCP soil and watershed conservation section manager. “The runoff risk advisory forecast can help farmers make more informed decisions and mitigate runoff potential by helping determine when the best time to spread is based on both current field conditions and short-term weather forecasts.”

For more information about nutrient management planning, visit https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/NutrientManagement.aspx.

Alternatives to High-Risk Manure Spreading

Farmers should contact their crop consultant or [county land conservation office](#), for help identifying alternatives to high-risk spreading. Larger farms with a permit can also reach out to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). These professionals can help identify fields where the risk is lower and alternative practices, such as stacking manure in a safe location.

Manure Spill Requirements

DATCP reminds manure haulers and drivers to put safety first when traveling on roadways in order to avoid spilling manure, prevent injuries, and protect the health of people and the environment.

“Operator error accounts for a large share of the manure spills and incidents that occur between the farm and the field where manure is being applied,” said Kevin Erb, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension conservation professional training program manager. “Taking the time to be safe and maintaining your equipment are two ways to reduce the risk of an accidental manure spill. An accidental spill is not illegal, but failing to properly report and clean it up is.”

All agriculture and livestock operations must report spills or runoff that have the potential to impact surface or groundwater to the DNR's 24-hour emergency spills hotline at (800) 943-0003. More information about planning and prevention is available at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/agbusiness/manurespills.html>.

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