

Spreading Log

*The newsletter of the Professional Nutrient Applicators
Association of Wisconsin*

March 14, 2005

- **Manure Runoff, Application Errors in the news**
 - **Certification Recognition**
 - **Certification Training**
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3. Dark, manure coated snow absorbs solar heat, even on cloudy days (The only fields melting and moving on several cloudy days (temp 25-28) were ones with manure).
4. Application rates were generally low (<8,000 gal/acre), but given the conditions, should have been lower.

Manure Runoff, Application Errors

The annual winter snowmelt in February led to more than a dozen manure runoff events, many of which will result in fines/penalties against the farmer and the manure applicator. Some resulted in fish kills, which made newspapers and television news reports across the upper Midwest.

What caused the problems? The majority of the cases were liquid manure spread on frozen or snow covered ground. This year's events were particularly bad for several reasons:

1. The January rain/melt created an ice sheet, which not only kept the manure from attaching to the soil, but preventing melting snow from soaking in. The same ice sheeting filled in the roughened soil, meaning that when it melted, it moved quickly
2. Those applying manure did not watch the weather forecasts as closely as they should have.

What can be done to prevent problems? Not spreading on frozen/snow covered ground is the best solution (several counties, including Dane, are now proposing outright bans manure application as a result of these events). If spreading must be done on frozen ground (to prevent a manure storage overflow), here are some potential ways to reduce (but not eliminate) the risk:

- Limit rates. Lower rates reduce risk.
- Spread small portions of field rather than whole field (leave wide strips between, cover these later in spring).
- Stay back at least 200 feet from waterways and low areas.
- Spread on the flattest fields & the ones farthest away from water resources.
- Choose fields with lots of last year's crop residue – avoid silage, alfalfa, soybean fields.
- Apply on contour – manure runs first in your wheel tracks in the snow.
- Choose roughest (plowed) fields.

Several farms with inadequate storage are renting space in other farm's manure storage. Yes, there is a double cost to be paid (move it now, apply later), but the cost of appearing on the 6 o'clock news is also very high. We each need to do our part to prevent problems.

Certification Recognition

At the March 3 PNAAW Board Meeting, the board voted to create a decal for members who have completed certification. This decal (8 inches across) can be placed on equipment (trucks, tractors) to help those who have become certified gain recognition for their efforts.



A limited number will be provided free of charge to certified members, with the opportunity to order additional ones for your equipment provided. Decal orders will be placed on April 1 for those who have completed at least Level 1 by that date.

A brochure that will help you explain the reasons to hire a certified applicator to your customers is also being produced. Copies will be made available to members, and will include room for a business card or label with your business name. For more information, contact Kevin Erb at 920.391.4652

Certification Opportunities

For those firms who are not Level 1 certified, or want a refresher on certification, several classes are scheduled for later this month. They are:

March 21, Menomonie, 8 am – 11 am, CENEX City Lights Restaurant, Hwy B and I-94. Pre-register w/Jerry Clark: 715.726.7950

March 24, Owen, 11 am – 2 pm, Meadow View Golf Course 1 mile north of HWY 29, 800 E. Third St. Pre-register w/Jerry Clark: 715.726.7950

March 24, Appleton, 9 am - noon, UW Extension office, 3365 W. Brewster (kitty corner from Fleet Farm West). Pre-register with Kevin Erb (920.391.4652) or Carla Heimen (920.294.4032)

March 28, Lancaster, 9 am – Noon, UW Extension office, Fairgrounds. Pre-register with Ted Bay at 608.723.2125

Meetings include breakfast at Menomonie, and lunch at Owen, Appleton and Lancaster.

Level 1 certification is valid for one year, and those who have completed a training session are eligible to train their own staff. You may bring your entire staff, or just a few key employees to these sessions. Pre-registration is required.

Ethics Note: Copies of the association ethics are included in this mailing. These were approved unanimously at the annual meeting.