

For Immediate Release:

CAUTION URGED WHEN WINTER SPREADING MANURE

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While winter manure spreading has always been practiced, and for the most part continues to be a permissible activity, livestock farmers need to carefully consider where, when and how manure is spread on their land so that the potential for polluting groundwater and surface water is minimized. Farmers can be, and have been in the past, held responsible for polluting water resources with manure.

Under state law NR 151.07 passed in 2002, all farmers are currently required to prepare and follow nutrient management plans, which among other things, restrict the winter spreading of manure in environmentally sensitive areas. However, this law can only be enforced if cost-sharing is provided, or if nutrient management is required under some type of government program. As an alternative, some municipalities have enacted local manure management ordinances that regulate the winter spreading of manure in environmentally sensitive areas.

Regardless of whether or not a nutrient management plan is required, farmers are strongly encouraged to follow the guidelines given below when spreading manure on frozen and snow covered soils in order to protect our water resources from runoff pollution, and to minimize farm operation risks:

- Do not apply manure within 300 feet of a river, stream or ditch; or within 1,000 feet of a lake, pond or flowage
- Do not apply manure on slopes greater than 9% (12% if cropland is contour strip cropped or contour farmed)
- Do not apply manure within 200 feet upslope of direct conduits to groundwater such as a well, sinkhole, tile inlet, surface fractured bedrock, sand and gravel pits, or rock quarries
- Do not apply manure on land within 50 feet of a potable drinking water well

Following these guidelines may not guarantee that pollution of groundwater or surface water will not occur, but it will be a step in the right direction to minimize the risk. If you would like winter manure spreading restriction maps prepared for your farm, contact the Dodge County Land Conservation Department at 920-386-3660. For additional information on nutrient and manure management practices, please visit the Dodge County web site at www.co.dodge.wi.us, and under "departments" click on "Land Conservation".