

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: 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. The tool helps determine the potential for manure runoff from a field depending on weather conditions and soil temperature. Spreading manure when there is an elevated risk of runoff can send manure into streams and threaten water quality.

“A nutrient management plan helps determine where and how much manure you should spread,” said Andrea Topper, DATCP’s soil and watershed management training and outreach conservation specialist. “The runoff risk advisory forecast can tell you when to spread that manure. Assessing current field conditions is just one step farmers should use in their decision to spread manure.”

The runoff risk advisory forecast includes maps showing short-term runoff risk for daily field application planning. The maps account for soil saturation and temperature, weather forecast, snow and crop cover, and slope. The National Weather Service updates the forecast three times daily. 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, [county land conservation office](#), or

the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for help identifying alternatives to high-risk spreading. One possible alternative is 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.

“About 31% of preventable transportation-related manure spills are due to operator error,” said Kevin Erb, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension conservation professional training program director. “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 affecting water 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>.