

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.

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, crop cover, and slope. The National Weather Service updates the forecast four times daily.

“A nutrient management plan helps determine where to spread and the proper application rate while the runoff risk advisory forecast helps determine when to spread. Assessing current field conditions is just one step in the process farmers should use to make decisions,” said Andrea Topper, DATCP soil and watershed management training and outreach conservation specialist. “Farmers who don’t have a plan can talk to their crop consultant or county conservationist to develop one.”

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. 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.

“About one third 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. “Attentive driving 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 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>.