

September 12, 2014

Fertilizer Certification – Jim Hoorman, Putnam County Extension

The following information came from the Ohio Department of Agriculture: “In June, Governor Kasich signed the Ohio agriculture nutrients law which will require farmers applying fertilizer to become certified. The new law is Ohio Revised Code 905.321-322 and can be accessed at: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/905.322> and <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/905.321>. This certification is part of a broader initiative developed by a task force convened in 2012 with several Ohio agencies participating. The task force focused on developing recommendations for improving Ohio’s waterways while maintaining the integrity of the region’s agricultural industry. A fact sheet about the new law is available from ODA at: <http://agri.ohio.gov/apps/odaprs/doc/Senate%20Bill%20150%20FAQs.pdf>

Who needs a fertilizer certification? Fertilizer certification is required if you apply fertilizer (other than manure) to more than 50 acres of agricultural production grown primarily for sale. The law also allows for an uncertified person to apply fertilizer if they are under the direct supervision of a person who is certified. If you have the co-op or other custom applicator make your fertilizer applications, you do not need the certification. **When do I need the certification?** The certification must be obtained by September 30, 2017. Farmers have three years to get certified to apply fertilizer. Farmers will be able to get certified in conjunction with their Ohio pesticide applicator’s license.

How will the certification process work? There are three steps in the certification process. You must: fill out an application form, pay an application fee, and attend a training session. A person that already has a valid commercial or private pesticide applicator license must apply for the certification but will not be required to pay the application fee. The fertilizer training session will also be included in the pesticide license training beginning in early 2015.

If you **DO NOT have an Ohio Pesticide Applicator License**, follow these steps: 1) Attend an initial fertilizer certification training class. 2) Complete and sign a fertilizer certification form at the end of the training class. 3) You will receive an invoice for \$30 from the Ohio Department of Agriculture for your license. You will need to recertify for fertilizer certification every three years.

If you **DO have an Ohio Pesticide Applicator License**, follow these steps: 1) Attend a fertilizer certification training class offered with your pesticide recertification. Classes will begin this winter. 2) Complete and sign a fertilizer certification form at the end of the training class. 3) You're done. Because you already have an Ohio private applicator license, there is no charge for the fertilizer certification. You will recertify your fertilizer certification every three years along with your pesticide license.

How often do I have to renew my certification? All certifications will be valid for three years, at which point the applicator will need to be recertified. The recertification procedure will be the same as the initial certification procedure. **If I hire someone else to apply my fertilizer do I**

still have to be certified? No, however the person hired to apply fertilizer must be certified or under the direct supervision of someone who is certified.

What happens if I don't get certified? Applying commercial fertilizer after September 30th, 2017 without a certification could result in fines and/or being charged with a misdemeanor offense. **How much will it cost?** The initial application fee for fertilizer certification will be the same as the pesticide license fee: \$30. A person that already has a valid commercial or private applicator license will not be required to pay the application fee. **Do I have to keep records of my fertilizer usage?** Yes, the bill requires certified applicators to maintain records including, but not limited to the date, place and rate of application of fertilizer, the type of fertilizer, and the name of the person applying the fertilizer. Records must be maintained for three years. **Will I be inspected?** The Ohio Department of Agriculture will conduct random record audits.” (ODA website)

Several initial meetings are being held locally: **September 25, 2014**, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (registration begins at 8:00 a.m.), The Lighthouse Banquet Facility, 10055 W. U.S. Route 224, Findlay, OH 45840 Contact OSU Extension, Hancock County at 419-422-3851

September 26, 2014, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (registration begins at 8:00 a.m.) Paulding county OSU Extension Office, 503 Fairground Drive, Paulding, OH 45879. Contact OSU Extension, Paulding County at 419-399-8225. ***Both of these 3-hour fertilizer training programs qualifies for initial certification and also for those who already have a pesticide applicator license.***