



MS4 Permit: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program began as a federal program under the Federal Clean Water Act. Pennsylvania implemented state regulation of the program in 2003. The goal of MS4 is to prevent storm water pollution from entering the waters of the Commonwealth. In turn, municipalities are required to develop a storm water management program, based on federal guidelines. MS4 programs are comprised of six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs).

This public service announcement will cover MCM #1: Public Education & Outreach. As the title suggests, the goal of MCM #1 is to educate the public on stormwater pollution and prevention.

Now is the perfect time of year to pass on information developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture regarding the use of fertilizer. Pennsylvania enacted a new law on July 11, 2022, updating requirements for both manufacturers and applicators. How does that affect you? The updated law defines a fertilizer applicator as anyone who applies fertilizer, including lawn care professionals, farmers and homeowners.

The first place to begin when considering the use of fertilizer is to properly assess your lawn's nutrient needs. Then, select a fertilizer that is appropriate for your lawn. Follow the directions on the fertilizer label to apply the correct amount of product, at the correct rate, using a spreader that has been properly calibrated. Using less or more than the optimum amount of fertilizer does a disservice to your lawn, the environment and your wallet.

The Department of Agriculture recommends the following best management practices:

- Use a properly calibrated fertilizer spreader to apply your product.
- Do not apply if the ground is frozen or snow-covered.
- Do not apply if heavy rain is expected.
- Maintain a 15-foot buffer from waterways.
- Apply only to the intended application site.
- Do not apply near water, storm drains or drainage ditches.
- Sweep back onto the turf any fertilizer that lands on an impervious surface like your sidewalk, driveway or street.

Follow the 4Rs of Nutrient Management:

- Right Source
- Right Rate
- Right Time
- Right Place

