

Summary of Northeastern State Laws Regulating the Formulation, Sale or Use of Turf Fertilizers, 1990-2012

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Abbreviations Used:

P = Phosphorus

TN = Total Nitrogen

WSN = Water Soluble Nitrogen

SRN = Slow Release Nitrogen

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State:	Connecticut	Maine	Maryland	New Hampshire	New Jersey	New York	Vermont
Statute	Public Act # 12-155	Maine Revised Statutes 38 § 419	Maryland Statutes, Ag § 6-201,-210,-223, -224. Ag § 8-801, -803.	NH Revised Statutes, Title 50, 483B § 1-20), NH Code of Regs, Env. 1402.14	NJ Statutes 4: 9-15.8a, 58: 10A-61 through -69.	NY Statues AGM 10-146g, ENV 17-2101 through -2105.	Vermont Statues 10 § 1266b.
P restrictions?	No product containing more than 0.67% phosphate may be applied to established, nonagricultural turf without a recent (< 2 yrs) soil test showing need for P (1/1/13).	No restriction.	No turf fertilizer > 5% P may be labeled for use on established lawn or be labeled with spreader settings unless it is specifically labeled as a starter fertilizer (4/1/11). No person may apply fertilizer containing P above trace unless establishing or repairing a lawn, or unless a recent soil test (<3 years) shows a need for P. (10/1/13)	See "Buffers" below.	No product containing P may be applied to established, nonagricultural turf without a recent (<3 yrs) soil test showing need for P unless turf is being repaired or sub-surface application to feeder roots is performed. No product containing P may be sold unless specifically labeled for turf establishment or repair or subsurface application. (1/1/12)	No product containing P > 0.67% P may be applied to established, nonagricultural turf unless a P test shows need for P. P is allowed during establishment (first growing season).	No person shall apply fertilizer to turf containing more than 0.67% P unless a soil test performed <18 months prior to application shows a need for P or the product is labeled as a starter product and is used to establish turf during the first growing season. (1/1/12)
Compost? (i.e. unmanipulated animal or vegetable manure)	May not be applied to established, nonagricultural turf without a recent (< 2 yrs) soil test showing need for P (1/1/13).	No restriction.	Excluded from the definition of commercial fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.	See "Buffers" below.	Excluded from definition of fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.	Excluded from definition of phosphorus fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.	Excluded from definition of phosphorus fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.
Organics (containing P – including manipulated animal and vegetable manures)?	May not be applied to established, nonagricultural turf without a recent (< 2 yrs) soil test showing need for P (1/1/13).	No restriction.	May only be applied by pro applicators, with a max rate of 0.25 lb/1000ft ² per application and 0.5 lb/1000ft ² per year. May not be applied if soil test is optimal or excessive for P.	See "Buffers" below.	Exempted from restriction on sales. May be applied at no more than 0.25 lb/1000ft ² P per application.	Not exempted (see P restrictions above)	Excluded from definition of phosphorus fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.
Treated Wastewater Biosolids?	May not be applied to established, nonagricultural turf without a recent (< 2 yrs) soil test showing need for P (1/1/13).	No restriction.	May only be applied by pro applicators, with a max rate of 0.25 lb/1000ft ² per application and 0.5 lb/1000ft ² per year. May not be applied if soil test is optimal or excessive for P.	See "Buffers" below.	Excluded from definition of fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.	Not exempted (see P restrictions above)	Excluded from definition of phosphorus fertilizer and thus from all restrictions.
Retail Signage?	Commissioner of Agriculture "may approve" consumer information related to P in fertilizer for distribution at point of sale. No requirement.	Required (1/1/08). Signs must warn against application of fertilizer containing P to turf unless a soil test shows need for P or establishing a new lawn.	Not required, but the law requires specific language be printed on bag labels warning against improper application.	None.	NJ State Experimental Ag Station "shall provide" posters for retailers to display.	Retailers selling turf fertilizer containing P > 0.67% must post signs saying that P is only to be used on new turf and when a soil test shows P is needed. (1/1/12)	Retailers selling turf fertilizer containing P > 0.67% must post signs saying that P is only to be used on new turf and when a soil test shows P is needed. (1/1/12)
Retail Separation?	None.	None.	None.	None.	None.	Turf fertilizer containing P >0.67% must be displayed separately from fertilizer with ≤0.67% P. (1/1/12)	Turf fertilizer containing P >0.67% must be displayed separately from fertilizer with ≤0.67% P. (1/1/12)

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N restrictions?	None.	None.	No more than 0.7 lb/1000ft ² WSN and 0.9 lb/1000ft ² TN may be applied in a single application. Label recommended application practices must reflect these limits. Annual application limits are as stated by the University of Maryland Extension (dependent on grass species and age of lawn). Between November 15 and December 1, pro applicators may only apply WSN (no SRN) at a max rate of 0.5 lb/1000ft ² . An enhanced efficiency fertilizer may be applied at a max rate of 2.5 lb/1000ft ² per application such that the monthly release rate is ≤ 0.7 lb/1000ft ² TN (10/1/13)	None.	A person who is not a professional applicator may not apply more than 0.7 lb/1000ft ² WSN and 0.9 lb/1000ft ² TN per application and may not apply more than 3.2 lb/1000ft ² TN per year. A professional applicator may not apply more than 0.7 lb/1000ft ² WSN and 1.0 lb/1000ft ² TN per application and may not apply more than 4.25 lb/1000ft ² TN per year. (1/1/13)	None.	No person may apply nitrogen fertilizer to turf, where nitrogen fertilizer is defined as any turf fertilizer with <15% of TN as SRN (see below). (1/1/12)
SRN requirement?	None.	None.	20% of TN.	See "Buffers" below.	20% of TN.	None.	15% of TN.
Golf Courses?	Exempted.	No restriction.	Fertilizer application must be done by a certified professional applicator according to the parts of the law that regulate activity by professional applicators. (10/1/13)	Not excluded from buffer provisions.	Exempted.	Not exempted.	Generally exempted. However, golf courses must submit a nutrient management plan to VT DEC as a condition of their pesticide application permit (7/1/12).
Application Cut-off Dates?	No application between December 1 and March 15	None.	No application between November 15 and March 1.	None.	No application between November 15 and March 1.	No application between December 1 and April 1.	No application between October 15 and April 1.
Professional applicators?	Same as above.	None.	No application between December 1 and March 1.	None.	No application between December 1 and March 1.	Same as above.	Same as above.
Buffer Around Waterbodies?	20 feet .	None.	15 feet.	Within 25 feet – no application. Within 250 feet – any fertilizer used must be ≤ 2% P and ≥ 50% of TN as SRN.	25 feet . One "rescue treatment" per year is allowed in the 10-25 foot zone, if done by a professional applicator.	20 feet.	25 feet.
Buffer if using drop spreader, rotary with deflector, or a targeted liquid spray?	15 feet.	None.	10 feet.	Same as above.	10 feet.	3 feet.	25 feet.

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Application on impervious surfaces?	Prohibited.	Not mentioned.	Prohibited.	Not mentioned.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Application when heavy rain is forecast and when soil is saturated?	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.	Prohibited.	Not mentioned.	Prohibited.	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.
State certification program for professional applicators?	None.	None.	Shall be established by University of Maryland in consultation with state department of agriculture. All professional applicators must either be certified or under the direct supervision of a certified person. (10/1/13)	None.	Shall be established by NJ State Experimental Agriculture Station and the state department of environmental protection. All professional applicators must be certified. (1/1/12)	None.	None.
Local ordinances regulating turf fertilizer?	Prohibited.	No restriction.	Pre-empted.	No restriction.	Pre-empted.	Pre-empted unless local jurisdiction can demonstrate that more stringent regulations are required to protect local water quality.	No restriction.