

NEWS RELEASE

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State rule affects those who work with agricultural fertilizer

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Those hired to apply, handle or transport fertilizer for agricultural purposes within Indiana must become certified through the Office of the Indiana State Chemist and Seed Commissioner by Jan. 1, 2012.

The new rule also requires certification for anyone applying manure from confined feeding operations. Certification exams are conducted at the Purdue University-based OISC, with exams available at remote testing sites starting in January.

A state law passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2009 created the rule that mandated the certification, known as Category 14, said Leo Reed, the OISC's manager of certification and licensing.

"This rule is designed to give fertilizer and manure applicators the opportunity to demonstrate their competence in handling and applying these materials, in a manner to protect the waters of the state and the environment in general," Reed said.

The rule covers "fertilizer material," defined as both commercial fertilizer and manure from confined feeding operations. CFOs are livestock facilities that house at least 300 cattle or 600 swine or sheep or 30,000 fowl, such as chickens, turkeys or other poultry. There are about 1,500 CFOs in Indiana. Because they house more animals than CFOs, concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, also fall under Category 14.

"The key is fertilizer material 'for hire or manure,'" Reed said. "Those applying any fertilizer materials for hire and those people applying manure from a CFO -- even to their own property -- must receive Category 14 certification if they use in excess of 10 cubic yards, or 4,000 gallons, of manure per year.

"So if you're applying manure from those facilities you need certification. If you're transporting manure from those facilities, you need certification. If you're distributing manure from your facility or individuals are coming to pick it up from you, you need certification or at least a fertilizer dealer permit."

The Category 14 exam consists of about 70 questions. The exam is free, although

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remote testing sites operated by a contracted vendor of H&R Block charge a fee.

Passing the exam qualifies participants to be licensed. A five-year private applicator license is \$20, while a fertilizer business license is \$45 and good for one year.

A one-year fertilizer distributor license is \$45 and requires no certification exam. No extra license fees will be charged to those holding pesticide licenses.

For additional information about Category 14, exam testing sites and pre-test training sessions, visit the OISC website at <http://www.isco.purdue.edu/> and click on the "Fertilizer Applicator Certification Rule" link, or call OISC toll-free at 1-800-893-6637.

Purdue Pesticide Programs will offer a training manual in January. "Category 14 Agricultural Fertilizer Applicator" will sell for \$32 and be available through Purdue Extension's The Education Store at <http://www.the-education-store.com/> or 1-888-398-4636.

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Related website:

Purdue Pesticide Programs: <http://www.ppp.purdue.edu/>