New Wisconsin State Law Bans Use of Phosphorus in Lawn Fertilizer

Use Restrictions
Under the new law, turf fertilizer that is labeled as containing phosphorus or available phosphate cannot be applied to residential lawns. There are some exceptions to this.

Exceptions

- Fertilizer that is labeled as containing phosphorus or available phosphate can be used for new lawns (seed or sod) during the growing season in which the grass is established.
- Fertilizer that is labeled as containing phosphorus or available phosphate can be used if the soil is an area is deficient in phosphorus, as shown by a soil test performed no more 36 months (three years) before the fertilizer is applied. The soil test must be performed by a soil testing laboratory.
- Fertilizer that is labeled as containing phosphorus or available phosphate can be applied to pastures, land used to grow grass for sod or any other land used for agricultural production or for home gardens.
- A fertilizer retailer may post a sign advising customers that turf fertilizer containing phosphorus or available phosphate is available upon request for uses listed above (establishing grass or a lab test shows phosphorus deficiencies in the lawn or the product will be used for agricultural production.)

Penalties

- Any one who violates regulations on the use of fertilizer containing phosphorus or available phosphate may be required to pay a penalty of not more than $50 for a first violation and not less than $200 nor more than $500 for a second or subsequent violation.

For more information on the turf fertilizer law, see the specific sections listed above or contact Charlene Khazae, fertilizer program manager, 608-224-4541.