

What You Should Know About Florida's Urban Turf Fertilizer Rule

On December 31, 2007, The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services adopted the final statewide Urban Turf Fertilizer Rule RE-1.003(2) FAC. The purpose of the rule was to limit the primary plant nutrient content of (N-P-K) in fertilizers, primarily nitrogen and phosphate for urban turf and lawns.

Specialty Fertilizer Products labeled for turf and lawns:

Florida's Urban Turf Rule requires Specialty Fertilizer Products labeled for turf or laws to limit the amount of nitrogen and phosphate.

Nitrogen: A maximum of 0.7 lbs of readily available nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. at any one time based on the soluble fraction of nitrogen formulated in the fertilizer. A maximum of 1 lb total (N) per 1000 sq. ft. to be applied at any one time, not exceeding the annual nitrogen recommendations in the Fertilizer Guidelines for Established Turf Grass Lawns in Three Regions of Florida.

Phosphate: A maximum of 0.25 lbs P₂O₅ / 1000 sq. ft. per application & not exceed 0.5 lbs P₂O₅ / 1000 sq. ft. per year. Application rates above these levels would require a soil sample of the application site to justify an increase in P₂O₅.

The Maximum Coverage must be prominently displayed on the front of the bag stated in square feet. Example: This bag covers 5000 sq. ft.

Fertilizer products will require the following precautionary statement: "Do not apply near water, storm drains or drainage ditches. Do not apply if heavy rain is expected. Apply this product only to your lawn / garden, and sweep any product that lands on the driveway, sidewalk, or street, back onto your lawn / garden."

Fertilizer Products labeled for use as starter fertilizer are intended for a one-time application at planting to encourage root growth & shall have directions for use that do not exceed an application rate of 1.0 lb of P₂O₅ / 1000 sq. ft.

There have been misconceptions of what products must adhere to Florida's Urban Turf Rule. All "Specialty Fertilizer Products" that have labeling for "Turf or Lawns" is subject to the requirements of Florida's Urban Turf Rule. The categories of these products include mixed fertilizer; fertilizer materials; fertilizer-pesticide mixtures; all manure products and fertilizer-seed mixture products.

When the words "Turf or Lawns" is mentioned on the front or back of the bag or container, Florida's Urban Turf Rule 5E-1.003(2) FAC will apply.

For Information contact:

William R. Cox, CPM
Environmental Manager,
Florida Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Compliance Monitoring
3125 Conner Boulevard, Building #8
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650
Tel: (850) 617-7861
Email: William.Cox@freshfromflorida.com