

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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Commissioner

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES ("MDAR") HEREBY GIVES NOTICE OF A GENERAL HEARING, PURSUANT TO M.G.L. C.30A, § 2 and 950 CMR 20.04, which require the Commissioner of MDAR to hold a public hearing to amend the following regulation: 330 CMR 31.00, PLANT NUTRIENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND AND NON-AGRICULTURAL LAND, NON-AGRICULTURAL TURF, AND LAWNS ("Regulation"). The purpose of this Regulation is to establish limitations on the application of plant nutrients to lawns and non-agricultural turf to prevent these non-point source pollutants from entering the surface and groundwater resources of the Commonwealth. These state-wide limitations on plant nutrient applications enhance the ability of municipalities to maximize the credits provided in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits issued by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Regulation further ensures that plant nutrients are applied to agricultural land in an effective manner to provide sufficient nutrients for plant growth while minimizing the impacts of the nutrients on water resources in order to protect human health and the environment.

The Regulation is being amended to address comments and concerns received from the agricultural and non-agricultural industries subject to the Regulation. It includes amendments to the conditions under which plant nutrients may be applied to land subject to the Regulation, the type of information that must be kept by agricultural operations, streamlining testing, and referencing industry standards when possible. MDAR has also clarified and streamlined language and added definitions to provided additional clarification.

All persons desiring to provide oral testimony are hereby notified to appear upon the following date and time at the respective designated location:

Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Richard Cronin Building Room 110, Westborough, MA, for a public hearing to be held on October 27, 2016, from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

In addition to oral testimony, written comments will be accepted before and at the Hearing. MDAR will continue to accept written comments until October 27, 2016, at 5:00 P.M. Written comments should be addressed to Taryn LaScola, Director, Division of the Division of Crop and Pest Services, Department of Agricultural Resources, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114.

The full text of the Regulation and background information is available at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/proposed-amendments-to-regulations.html>. A hard copy of the full text of the Regulation and background information are also available upon written request made to MDAR at the address set forth above.

By: John Lebeaux, Commissioner