

AEMCoP

Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice

On February 28, 2019, the for Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice replaced the Agricultural Waste Control Regulation (AWCR). BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) has partnered with the Province of BC to assist communicating the key changes related to AEMCoP.

There are new tools already developed to support implementation with more to come. Please ensure to keep your eyes and ears open for any updates on tips and tools available to you through emails, websites, regional info sessions, industry events, and more.

Nursery Container Production

This information applies specifically to Nursery Container Production. For more information on the new Agricultural Management Code of Practice, visit the Ministry of Environment's webpage: gov.bc.ca/Agricultural-Environmental-Management.

Records: Keeping records of your farm activities will prove that you are meeting the expectations of the new regulation. Records are not submitted to anyone but are required to be kept for up to 5 years as your own back up and could be requested during an inspection by provincial environmental protection staff. Activities that you require records for include:

- Use of fertilizers containing N and P, and other nutrient sources like compost – how much, what product, when, and where.
- The crop or fertility requirements that you used to determine the application rate of your nutrient sources.
- Monitoring of temporary piles of wood residues, compost, manure, or other agricultural by-products for signs of runoff and leachate.

If your farm is on the South Coast (a [high precipitation area](#)) and/or in a [vulnerable aquifer recharge area](#) be aware that in these areas there are specific requirements for piles of materials like vegetative debris, composts, or wood residue temporarily stored in the field.

There are new rules regarding the temporary field storage:

- Temporary piles are meant to be temporary. If you always use the same location a structure should be used for storage.
 - 7 months for vegetative debris, soilless media, finished compost
 - 12 months for wood residues and sites where composting is taking place
- Change where your temporary piles are located - using the same area continuously will cause nutrient build-up. Storage sites should not be used again within a 3 year window.
- In vulnerable aquifer recharge areas keep temporary piles off locations with coarse-textured soil
- In high precipitation areas cover temporary piles from October to April.

The regulation requires you to manage production such that leachate and any resulting contaminated runoff does not enter watercourses, contaminate groundwater, or cross a property boundary. Steps to ensure this:

- Apply fertilizer to match crop requirements, not more
- Avoid excess irrigation of container crops to minimize leachate

There continue to be requirements for registration and monitoring of [boilers and heaters](#) on agricultural operations. The new regulation has harmonized these with other regulators and added an exemption for registration of small capacity boilers and heaters (0.15 MW capacity or less and provided they are labelled in accordance with industry standards). **For more information, please visit the AEMCoP webpage: gov.bc.ca/Agricultural-Environmental-Management.**

Nursery Field Production

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There are new setbacks required when land-applying fertilizer near a watercourse or ditch that drains into one:

- Keep fertilizer 1.5 m away, keep composts and manure 3 m away.
- Keep 30 m away from drinking water sources like wells or surface water diversion points.

New Soil Testing Requirements: You are required to have soil test phosphorus and nitrate results for production areas from within the last 3 years if:

- Your operation is 2 ha in size or greater, and
- You apply fertilizers containing nitrogen and phosphorus or other nutrient sources, including compost or manure, to soil.

When soil samples are collected matters: the test results must be from soil samples collected in the fall in order to provide a 'report card' to assess residual nitrate at the end of season. There is more information on recommended soil sampling and testing available on the Ministry of Agriculture's [website](#). Starting in 2023, the soil test results required by the regulation and your location relative to vulnerable aquifer recharge areas will inform whether additional nutrient management planning is required for your operation. **For more information, please visit the AEMCoP webpage: gov.bc.ca/Agricultural-Environmental-Management**

More information on soil sampling and testing is available on the Ministry of Agriculture's website [here](#).