



Using fertiliser in the Horizons Region

Using fertiliser can contribute to nutrient loss into waterways, impacting on water quality and instream life, if it is not carefully managed.

How to ensure you are operating within the permitted activity rule

We recommend you read the rule conditions and contact a [Rural Advisor](#) if you have any questions. There are some simple things you can do to avoid having a resource consent.

Keep fertiliser out of waterways – rivers, streams and drains – and lakes, and their beds. This includes rivers and streams that dry up, with a bed wider than two meters. *Best practice is to leave a buffer at least 10 meters wide between the application area and the beds of waterways and lakes.*

Avoid rare, threatened and at-risk habitats except to enhance the habitat. *Horizons can provide free advice about the status of any indigenous vegetation on your farm.*

Follow the [Code of Practice for Nutrient Management](#) – this sets out best practice, and will help you get the best return for the fertiliser you apply, as well as minimising impacts on water quality.

If you are applying more than 60 kg of nitrogen per hectare per year averaged across the whole farm, or 150 kg of nitrogen per hectare per year on any application area you must have a nutrient budget which will need to be made available to Horizons on request¹. *If you have an intensive land use consent, you will have already prepared a nutrient budget management plan. If you need to submit a nutrient budget, talk to your local fertiliser representative as they will be able to complete one on your behalf.*

Prevent fertiliser from drifting or causing odour beyond your property boundary. Applying fertiliser on a calm day and leaving a buffer strip between the application area and the boundary will help you meet this condition.

If you can't meet all the conditions, a [Rural Advisor](#) can provide free advice to help you work out whether you can change how you apply fertiliser and whether you need consent.

¹ New Zealand Fertiliser Manufacturers' Research Association recommends that you seek advice from Horizons or your fertiliser representative if you intend to apply more than 50 kgN/ha in a

single application (109 kg urea/ha) or more than 200 kgN/ha/year in an application area.



Best Practice

There are some simple things you can do to get the most benefit from the effort and cost of applying fertiliser to your property. They include:

- Testing the soil for levels of essential nutrients – the cost of a soil test is much less than the cost of applying incorrect or unnecessary fertiliser, and can indicate trends in terms of what effects your management is having on soil nutrients and acidity.
- Avoiding applying fertiliser before heavy rainfall, or to saturated, pugged or compacted soils.

- Thinking of nitrogen fertiliser in the same way you would a feed supplement, to inform your decision-making about when to apply it.

The New Zealand Fertiliser Manufacturers' Research Association has a series of useful booklets, available on their [website](#), containing more detailed advice on best practice application of fertiliser.

Additional information

Contact Horizons Regional Council on 0508 800 800 or email help@horizons.govt.nz.