

The Primary Fertilizer Sources and Use Characteristics in Turfgrass Fertility Programs

Mike Goatley, Jr.

Extension Turfgrass Specialist

goatley@vt.edu

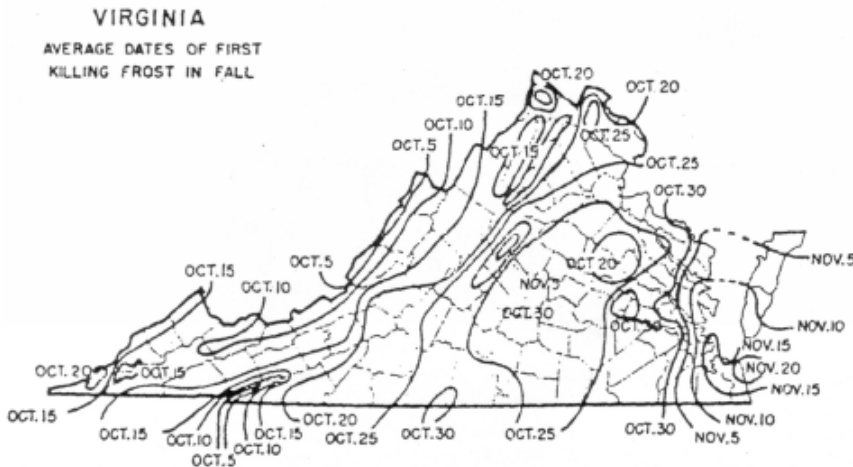
Section VI. Turfgrass Nutrient Recommendations for Home Lawns, Office Parks,
Public Lands and Other Similar Residential/Commercial Grounds

Recommended Season of Application For Nitrogen Fertilizers - Applies to all Turf

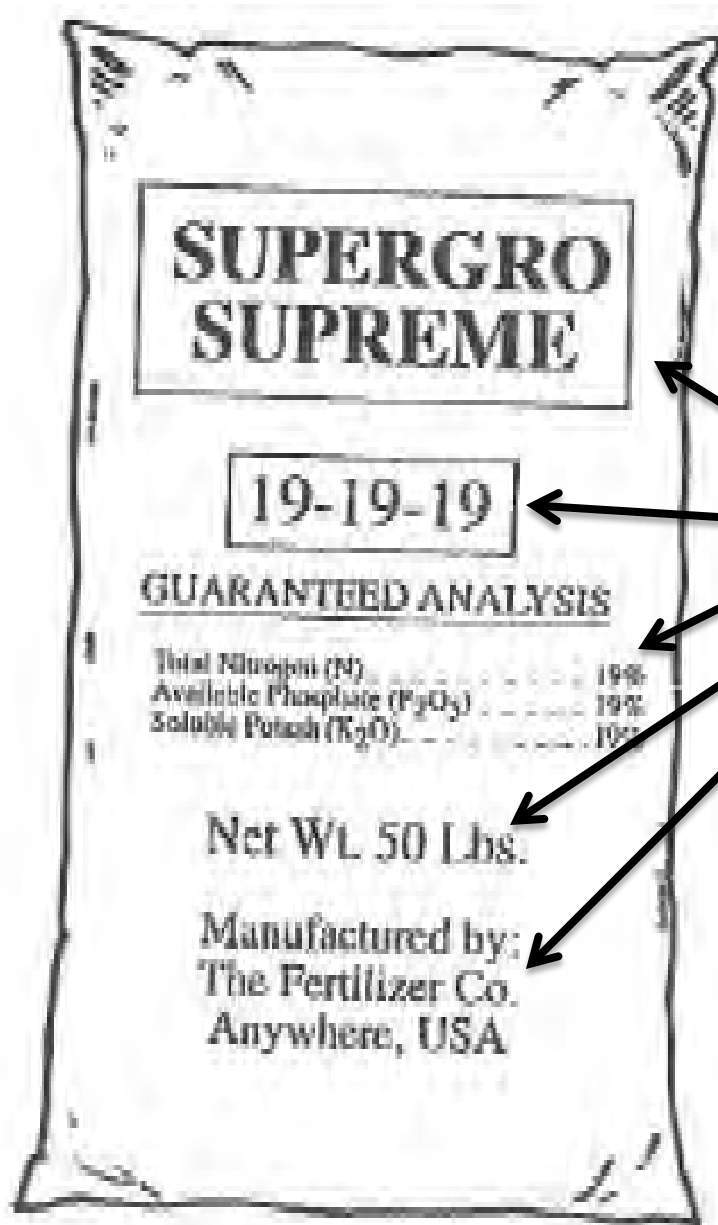
A nitrogen fertilization schedule weighted toward fall application is recommended and preferred for agronomic quality and persistence of cool season turfgrass; however, the acceptable window of applications is much wider than this for nutrient management. The nutrient management recommended application season for nitrogen fertilizers to cool season turfgrasses begins six weeks prior to the last spring average killing frost date and ends six weeks past the first fall average killing frost date (see Figures 6-1 & 6-2). Applications of nitrogen during the intervening late fall and winter period should be avoided due to higher potential leaching or runoff risk, but where necessary, apply no more than 0.5 pounds per 1,000 ft² of water soluble nitrogen. Higher application rates may be used during this late fall and winter period by using materials containing slowly available sources of nitrogen, if the water soluble nitrogen contained in the fertilizer does not exceed the recommended maximum of 0.5 pounds per 1,000 ft² rate. Do not apply nitrogen or phosphorus fertilizers when the ground is frozen.

The acceptable nitrogen fertilizer application season for non-overseeded warm season turfgrass begins no earlier than the last spring average killing frost date and ends no later than one month prior to the first fall average killing frost date (see Figures 6-1 & 6-2).

Figure 6-1



This image is from the Turfgrass Nutrient Recommendations section of the Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation's 2005 Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria. It serves as the basis for nutrient management programming and training in turfgrass systems.



The Big Five

Five required components must appear on a fertilizer label:

1. The Brand
2. The Grade
3. Guaranteed Analysis
4. Net Weight
5. Name and Address of the Registrant or Licensee

Water Soluble Nitrogen Sources

- Also referred to as “Readily Available N” sources
- Rapid growth and color responses expected
- Leaching potential (especially on sandy soils) and foliar burn potential significantly higher

Standard WSN Sources

Fertilizer	Analysis	Salt Index (>2.5 = high; 2.5 to 1=mod; <1 = low)	Water Solubility g/L (lb/gal)
Ammonium nitrate	34-0-0	3.2	1810 (15)
Urea	45-0-0	1.7	780 (6.5)
Ammonium Sulfate	21-0-0	3.3	710 (5.9)
Potassium nitrate	13-0-44	5.3	130 (1.1)

Water Soluble Nitrogen Sources

- Application levels of up to 1 lb of WSN/1000 sq feet/growing month are suitable in MOST situations. However, application levels SHOULD vary depending on:
 - The specific situation.... the grass and its use, the soil, the climate, impending weather conditions, surrounding environment.
 - While it is more labor intensive, N-use efficiency is improved by applying smaller levels of WSN on a more frequent basis... often referred to as ‘Spoon Feeding’
 - ‘Foliar Feeding’: nutrients delivered as a spray solution at a spray volume of at least 40 gallons per acre; N applied typically at 0.05 to 0.25 lb N/1000 sq ft.



Seasonal N totals when using predominately water soluble N sources*

Month	TF/PR/KBG	Berm/ St. Aug	Zoysia/ Centipede
Sept	1	0	
Oct	1	0	
Nov	0.5	0	
Apr	0.5 to 1	0.5	
May		1	1
June	0	1	
July	0	1	1
Aug	0	0.5	
Range for annual lbs N per 1000 sq ft	2-3.5	2-4	1-2

*100% WSN sources such as urea or ammonium sulfate and any other source that is $\leq 50\%$ slow release N.

American Association of Plant Food Control Officials Definitions

- Term “Enhanced Efficiency” be adopted to describe fertilizer products with characteristics that minimize the potential of nutrient losses to the environment, as compared to a “reference soluble” product (AAPFCO, Pub. 62, 2009).
 - “reference soluble” products are materials that are 100% water soluble fertilizers such as ammonium nitrate, urea... (AAPFCO, 1995).
- Enhanced Efficiency is an ‘umbrella term’ that covers categories of both ‘slow release’ and ‘stabilized’ N sources.

American Association of Plant Food Control Officials Definitions–AAPFCO, 2009

- The term “stabilized” be adopted to describe products that have been amended with an additive that reduces the rate of transformation of fertilizer compounds, resulting in extended time of availability in the soil. Examples of stabilizing amendments are nitrification inhibitors, nitrogen stabilizers, or urease inhibitors.
- Stabilized N is not classified as WIN or SAN at this time. It is the opinion of VT scientists that stabilized N be handled as water soluble N in terms of nutrient application levels and planning.

American Association of Plant Food Control Officials Definitions –AAPFCO, 2009

- The term “slow release” be adopted to describe fertilizer products that release (convert to a plant available form) their plant nutrients at a slower rate relative to a “reference soluble” product. Examples of slow release products are **coated or occluded materials** that regulate soluble nutrient release, **water insoluble**, or **slowly available water soluble**.

Defining Slowly Available N (SAN)

- "Slowly available nitrogen" means nitrogen sources that have delayed plant availability involving compounds which dissolve slowly, materials that must be microbially decomposed, or soluble compounds coated with substances highly impermeable to water such as polymer coated products, methylene urea, isobutylidene diurea (IBDU), urea formaldehyde based (UF), sulfur coated urea, and natural organics.

Defining SAN Sources

- There will be a designation on the label's guaranteed analysis indicating a specific percentage of SAN, Water Insoluble Nitrogen (WIN), Controlled Release Nitrogen (CRN) or Slow Release Nitrogen (SRN)
- For standardization the goal is to follow guidelines defined by AAPFCO– Assoc. of American Plant Food Control Officials)
- Slowly Available N is due to either:
 - Inherent synthesis/composition of the product (e.g. ureaformaldehyde, natural organics, or isobutyraldehyde diurea)
 - Coating (sulfur, polymer, or a combination of the two)

Controlled Release Fertilizers

- Reduced Solubility
 - Urea formaldehyde or “urea forms”
 - Methylene urea
 - Isobutylidene diurea (IBDU)
 - Occluded urea
- Coatings
 - Sulfur
 - Polymers
 - Resins

Low Water Solubility N Fertilizers

- Urea-formaldehydes or urea-forms
 - White, odorless solids containing about 38% N that are made by reacting urea with formaldehyde in the presence of a catalyst.
- Methylene urea
 - React methylene molecules with urea
- Isobutylidene Diurea (IBDU)
 - Approximately 30% N
 - React isobutyraldehyde with urea

Low-Solubility Compounds (UF, MU)

- Urea-formaldehyde reaction products

- Discovered in 1930s

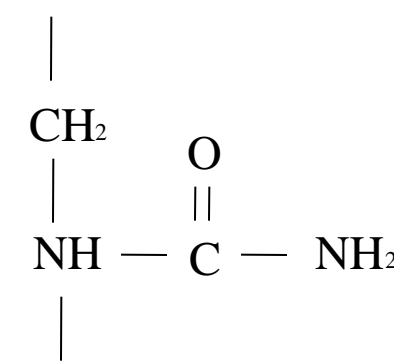
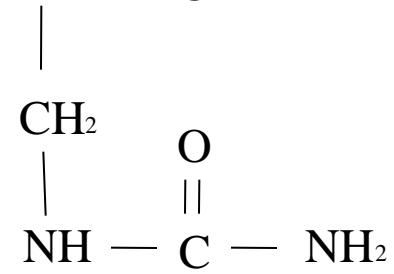
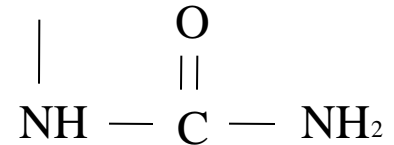
- First fertilizer use in 1940s

- Mixture of urea and UF polymers of various chain lengths

- Solid and liquid products

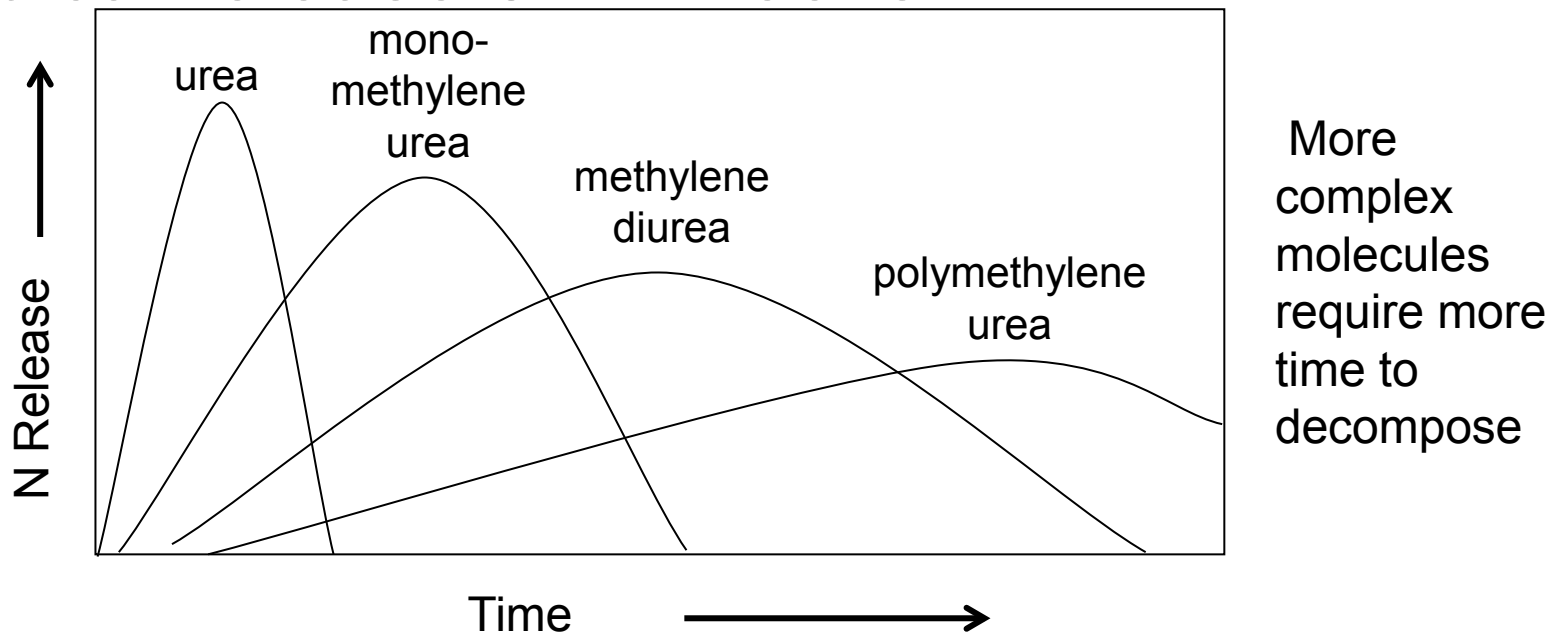
- Solubility dependent on chain length

- Products: Nutralene, Nitroform, Nitamin, CoRoN



Low-Solubility Compounds (UF, MU)

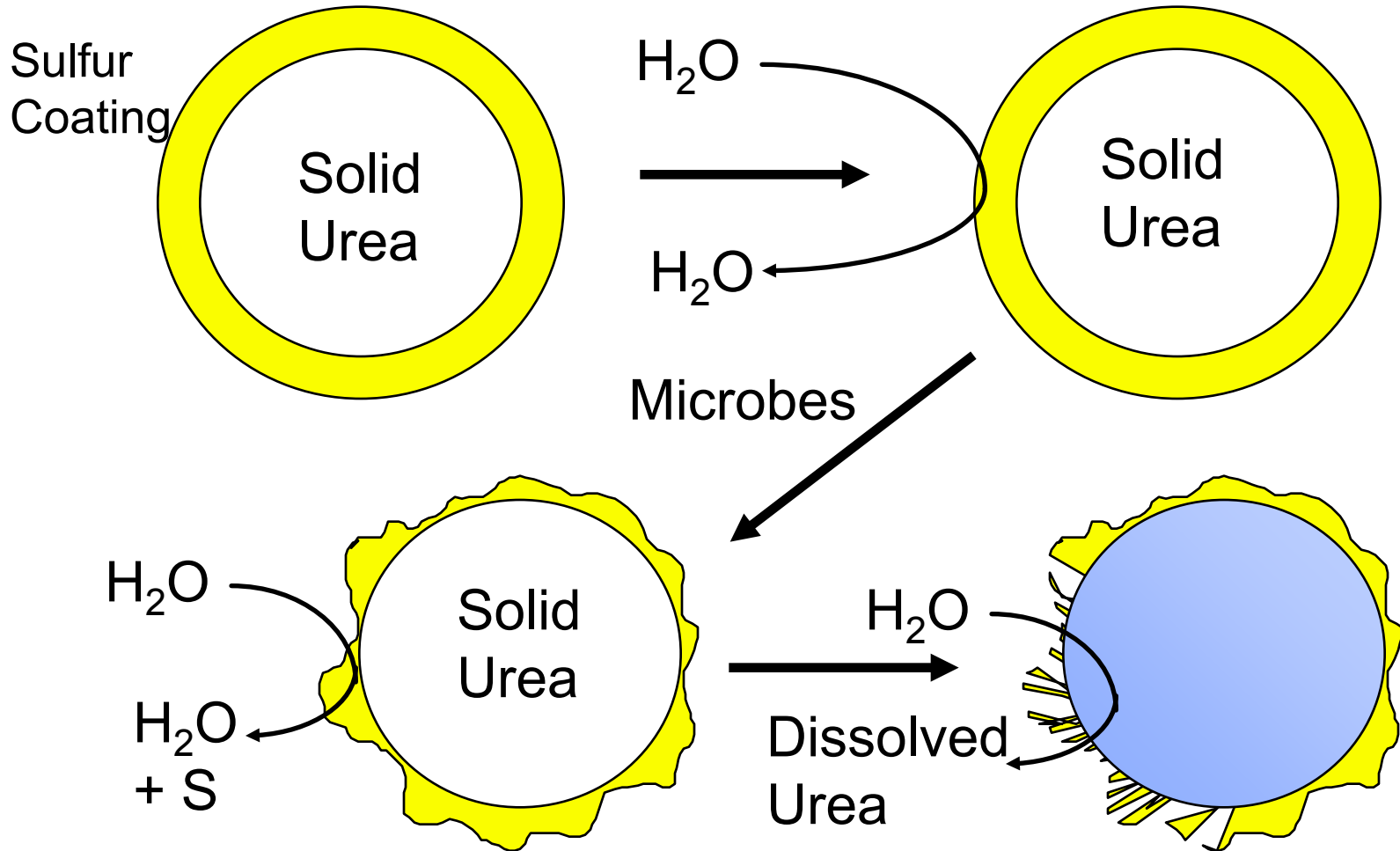
- N release by microbial mineralization (soil temperature, moisture, pH, etc)
- Longer chains = slower release
- Typical release 8-12 weeks



Coated Water-Soluble Fertilizers – Sulfur-Coated Urea

- N availability dependent on destruction of sulfur coating and diffusion
 - Physical breakage
 - Dispersion
 - Biological oxidation
- Release rate determined by
 - Thickness of coating
 - Environmental conditions
- Release slow and rates vary greatly

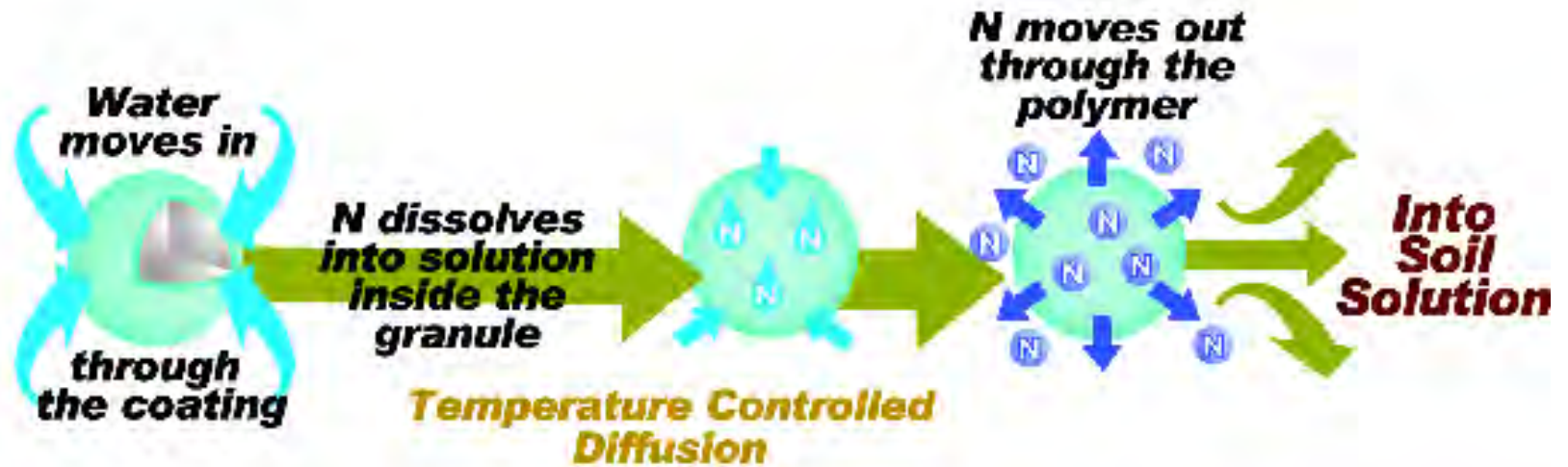
Breakdown of Sulfur Coating



Coated Water-Soluble Fertilizers – Polymer-Coated Fertilizers

- Polymer coatings applied to soluble fertilizer
- Release by diffusion through coating
- Release rate determined by
 - Polymer chemistry, thickness, coating process
 - Temperature
- Release can be highly controlled
- Can be designed to match plant uptake.
- Osmocote in 1967
- Products: Trikote, Polyon, Duration, ESN

How Does Polymer-Coated N Work?



N Fertilizers of Low Solubility

- Availability of N in these materials is
 1. related to their water solubility
 2. Related to the rate of microbiological decomposition of organic molecules
 3. Rate of chemical hydrolysis (getting the N molecules into solution) which is dependent on solubility, particle size and soil temperature.

Seasonal N totals when using predominately slow release N sources*

	TF/PR/KBG	Berm/ St. Aug	Zoysia/ Centipede
Date			
Sept 1	1.5	0	
Oct 15	1.5	0	
Nov	0	0	
Apr		1 to 1.5	
May	0 to 1		1
June		1 to 1.5	
July	0		1
Aug	0	1	
Range for annual lbs N per 1000 sq ft	3-4	3-4	1-2

*Sources that are \geq 50% slow release within a product (as indicated by terms such as Water Insoluble N or Slowly Available N in the guaranteed analysis)

DCRs Recommended Application Levels of Slow Release N Sources

- The intent is still to never apply more than 1 lb of N/1000 sq ft/turf growing month, so adjust application frequency for slow release sources accordingly to meet this recommendation. Based on current Standards and Criteria:
 - $\geq 50\%$ Slow Release? levels up to 1.5 lb N/1000 sq ft in a single application are acceptable during optimal growing conditions... this N would be expected to release over 6 wks.
 - $<50\%$ Slow Release N? no more than 1 lb N/1000 sq ft should be applied in a single application during optimal growing periods, releasing over a 4 week period

Does this 32-4-4 fertilizer contain slow release N, and if so, what % of the N is slow release?

GUARANTEED ANALYSIS	
Total Nitrogen (N).....	32%
3.5% Ammoniacal Nitrogen	
5.6% Water Insoluble Nitrogen	
17.2% Urea Nitrogen	
5.7% Other Water Soluble Nitrogen*	
Available Phosphate (P ₂ O ₅).....	4%
Soluble Potash (K ₂ O)	4%
Total Sulfur (S)	2%
2.0% Combined Sulfur (S)	
Nutrient Sources: Ammonium Phosphate, Ammonium Sulfate, Methylene Urea, Urea and Muriate of Potash.	
Chlorine (Cl) not more than	4%
*5.7% Slowly Available Nitrogen from Methylene Urea.	

5.6% WIN + 5.7% slowly available N = 11.3%;

11.3% 32% = 35.3% slow release N

While it contains both WIN and slowly available N, it would be restricted to a single maximum application level of 1 lb N/1000 sq ft.

Guaranteed Analysis:

Total Nitrogen (N)	.18%
7.5% Urea Nitrogen	
1.5% Ammoniacal Nitrogen	
9.0% Slowly Available Water Soluble Nitrogen*	
Available Phosphate (P ₂ O ₅)	.3%
Soluble Potash (K ₂ O)	.6%
Copper (Cu)	.005%
0.05% Chelated Copper (Cu)	
Iron (Fe)	.01%
0.1% Chelated Iron (Fe)	
Manganese (Mn)	.005%
0.05% Chelated Manganese (Mn)	
Zinc (Zn)	.005%
0.05% Chelated Zinc (Zn)	
<u>Derived From:</u> Urea, Methylene Urea, Potassium Carbonate, Monoammonium Phosphate, Phosphoric Acid, Copper EDTA Chelate, Iron EDTA Chelate, Manganese EDTA Chelate, Zinc EDTA Chelate.	
Chelating Agent: EDTA	
*9% slowly available Nitrogen from Methylene Urea	
Weight per gallon	10.33 lbs.
Potential acidity equivalent to 573 lbs. Calcium Carbonate per ton.	

How much of this product (lbs N/1000 sq ft) can be safely applied in a single application?

9% SAN/18% Total N = 50% SAN



Looking beyond N fertilization, almost every other nutrient should be applied on the basis of a current (and properly conducted) soil test.

Strive for at least a 4" depth sample if at all possible.

Report Number:

R07135-0071

Account Number:

77643

A&L Eastern Laboratories, Inc.

7621 Whitepine Road Richmond, Virginia 23237 (804) 743-9401

Fax No. (804) 271-6446 Email: office@a-l-labs-eastern.com



Send To: VIRGINIA GREEN LAWN CARE
POB 8623
RICHMOND, VA 23226

Grower: VIRGINIA GREEN LAWN CARE

Submitted By: VIRGINIA GREEN LAWN CARE

Farm I D:

Field I D:

SOIL ANALYSIS REPORT

Page: 1

Date Received: 5/15/2007

Date of Analysis: 5/16/2007

Date of Report: 5/17/2007

Analytical Method(s):
Mehlich III

Sample Number	Lab Number	Organic Matter			Phosphorus				Potassium		Magnesium		Calcium		Sodium		pH		Acidity H meq/100g	C.E.C. meq/100g					
		%	ENR lbs/A	Rate	Available ppm	Reserve ppm	Rate	N ppm	Rate	MG ppm	Rate	CA ppm	Rate	NA ppm	Rate	Soil pH	Buffer Index								
2548	4138	4.5	128	M	10	VL		101	M	125	M	650	L				4.8	6.5	4.0	8.5					
3961	4139	3.5	107	M	19	L		101	M	135	M	490	VL				4.5	6.4	5.3	9.1					
Sample Number	Percent Base Saturation					Nitrate		Sulfur		Zinc		Manganese		Iron		Copper		Boron		Soluble Salts		Chloride		Aluminum	
	K %	Mg %	Ca %	Na %	H %	NO3-N ppm	Rate	SO4-S ppm	Rate	ZN ppm	Rate	MN ppm	Rate	FE ppm	Rate	CU ppm	Rate	B ppm	Rate	ms/cm Rate	CL ppm	Rate	AL ppm	Rate	
2548	3.0	12.2	38.2		46.6																				
3961	2.8	12.3	26.8		58.0																				

Values on this report represent the plant available nutrients in the soil.
Rating after each value: VL (Very Low), L (Low), M (Medium), H (High), VH (Very High).
ENR - Estimated Nitrogen Release; C.E.C. - Cation Exchange Capacity.

Explanation of symbols: % (percent), ppm (parts per million), lbs/A (pounds per acre),
ms/cm (millimhos per centimeter), meq/100g (milli-equivalent per 100 grams).
Conversions: ppm x 2 = lbs/A, Soluble Salts ms/cm x 640 = ppm.

This report applies to the sample(s) tested. Samples are retained a maximum of thirty days after testing. Soil Analysis procedure: A&L EASTERN LABORATORIES, INC.

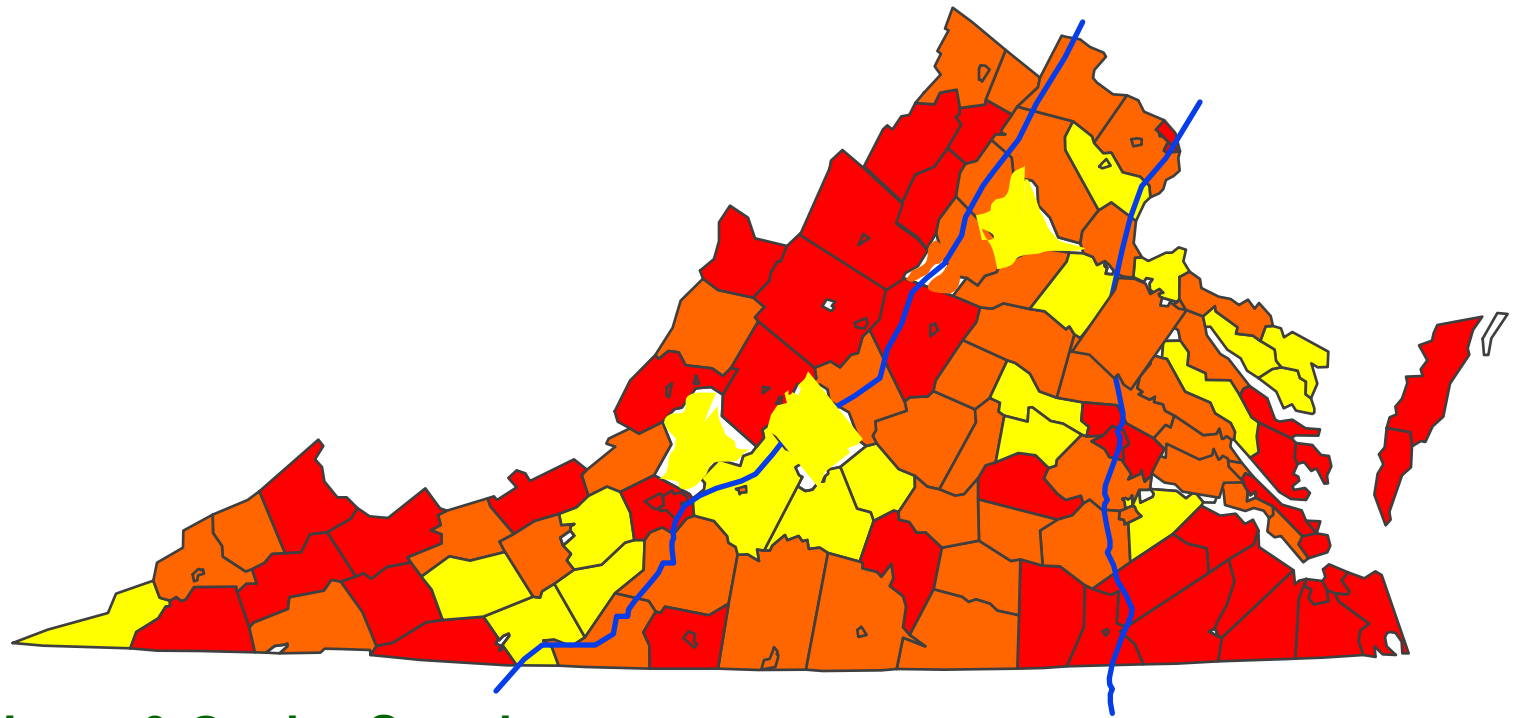
by: *Paul Chu*
Paul Chu, Ph.D.

Phosphorus– a known source of water quality issues that has direct links to urban landscapes



It only takes 25-75 ppb phosphorus contaminating a water source to trigger something this bad.

Agronomic Soil Test P Data Base in Virginia for years 2004-2006. (% soils rated "Very High")



32,172 Lawn & Garden Samples

≥10%-Yellow

≥20%-Orange

≥33%-Red

Heckendorn and Maguire, 2007

Worrisome?

- Yes... however, do these data correspond to all lawns statewide?
- Still, if P is not needed, then why apply it?



=





“What’s the difference between a poison and a cure?”

Where P is needed (as indicated by a soil test), it would be environmentally **IRRESPONSIBLE** to **NOT** apply P. Note the difference in turf establishment success from pre-plant P fertilization when needed as indicated by soil testing (left) vs. failure in establishment due to P deficiency (right) (photo courtesy of Dr. Tom Turner, University of Maryland).

So for phosphorus fertilization, decisions on applications are quite simple...

- 2 times that make sense regarding P applications:
 - ABSOLUTELY, On the basis of soil test results... if needed, then it SHOULD be applied because a healthy turf protects water quality
 - POSSIBLY, At establishment... typically 1 lb of phosphate per 1000 sq ft... benefits initial rooting at or just below soil surface... 'brings P to the root'

Primary Phosphorus Sources

Analysis	Salt Index (>2.5 = high; 2.5 to 1=mod; <1 = low)	Acid. Effect (units of lime to neutralize 100 units of fertilizer by weight)	Water Solubility (g/l, lb/gal)
11-48-0 Monoammonium phosphate	2.7	58	230 (1.9)
20-50-0 Diammonium phosphate	1.7	75	430 (3.6)
0-20-0 Superphosphate	0.4	0	20
0-45-0 Treble superphosphate	0.2	0	40

Potassium fertilization...

- Soil testing is still the most valid decision making tool, but since potassium does not have water quality concerns, there is quite a bit more flexibility in its application.
- POSSIBLY, 1 lb of potash per 1000 sq ft in spring and/or fall... potassium functions as the 'coolant/anti-freeze' of the plant world
- But as with anything, there can be too much of a good thing if it is overapplied.

Primary Potassium Sources

Analysis	Salt Index (>2.5 = high; 2.5 to 1=mod; <1 = low)	Acid. Effect (units of lime to neutralize 100 units of fertilizer by weight)	Water Solubility (g/l, lb/gal)
0-0-60 KCl	1.9	0	350 (2.9)
0-0-50 K ₂ SO ₄	0.9	0	120 (1)
KNO ₃ 13-0-44	5.3	(-23)	130 (1.1)

Other Macronutrients Used as Turf Fertilizers

- Magnesium: typically applied as a component of dolomitic limestone, but can also apply as magnesium sulfate and potassium magnesium sulfate (SulPoMag)
- Sulfur: can be applied as elemental S, but also applied as ammonium sulfate, potassium sulfate, calcium sulfate, magnesium sulfate, potassium magnesium sulfate (SulPoMag)



6 1'98

Micronutrient of Most Importance in Turf Fertility: Iron

- What is gained from Fe applications:
 - almost immediate color response from foliar application
 - no rapid increase in shoot growth rates that are often seen with N applications
 - 10-14 days in duration response is typical
 - Normal application rate 3 to 6 lbs Fe/Acre
 - potential to “mask” phytotoxicity concerns from pesticide or plant growth regulator applications
- Chelated forms are most popular for ease in handling, application, and response

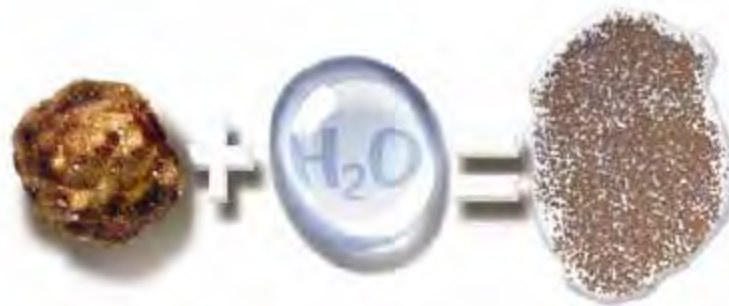


Micronutrients

- Micronutrient packages (B, Cu, Mn, Mo, Zn) are readily available
- Usually only necessary on sand-based systems
- rarely deficient, but might be a problem in sand based soils and/or soils with inappropriate pH's
- Chelated forms again are most popular.

How is the turf and fertilizer industry evolving to address nutrient management issues?

- Formulation technology (e.g. Dispersible Granule products, resulting in granular delivery with 'liquid-carrier type performance'.)



Other ways the turf industry is addressing nutrient management.

- More micronutrients being used.
- Microbial ‘activators’, biostimulants, supplemental plant growth products.
- Use of organics (fertilizers and compost sources) in appropriate locations.

Education: Convincing homeowners and municipalities that lawn debris on hardscapes IS a water quality concern



- *The major sources of phosphorus in runoff in storm sewers are from lawn clippings and tree leaves left in the streets and gutters. Other sources of phosphorus may come from soil particles either blown into the lakes by wind erosion or carried in runoff over bare soil.*

***FO-2903, Rosen and Horgan,
Univ. of Minnesota Extension
Service Publication.***



Can not 'brown' be the new 'green' when it comes to expanding the realm of warm-season grasses where they are best adapted?

And where one must have green, how about one of the new organic lawn dyes?





Power Companies HATE This!

Energy companies are scared that people will learn how to produce Free Electricity for their homes using this unique device.

Grass painting spreads as U.S. drought ravages lawns

Updated 7/27/2012 12:40 PM

Comment | Recommend <268 | Tweet 73 | +1 6

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – When this summer’s harsh U.S. drought turned her prized lawn brown, Terri LoPrimo had it painted green, making her suddenly lush-appearing yard the envy of her neighborhood.



Ronnie Sharp, left, and Brandy Birdwell of Imperial Painting spray turf paint on a drought ravaged lawn outside a auto repair shop in Indianapolis Friday.

Find Floodplan Maps, Facts, FAQs, Your Flood Risk Profile and More! www.floodsmart.gov

What is Scientology?

Think For Yourself and Find Out For Yourself. Scientology.org/What_Is_Scientology

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"It's a night-and-day difference," he said.

Missouri Turf Paint Inc. president Jon Graves said he's seen a slight increase this year in calls from people interested in either greening up residential lawns or wanting to get into the lawn-painting business.

Videos you may be interested in



Video released of Bin Laden officer shooting



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by Taboola
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- Deadly shooting at Wis. Sikh temple
- Baby animals spring up at 2012

Acceptance (albeit SLOW) and utilization of Buffers

*The logical utilization of buffer zones to enhance water quality protection continues to grow. 'Buffers' do not even need to be as dramatic as these to be effective.





Increased design and utilization of more 'Green Space' in golf and park settings... i.e. low impact vegetation.


Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training (FACT)

Module 1. Understanding and Interpreting Fertilizer Labels

Virginia Cooperative Extension

 VirginiaTech
Invent the Future

 VSU
VIRGINIA STATE

Virginia Department of  Agriculture and Consumer Services

 DCR
Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation



Lawn and Garden: Turf and Garden Tips

Turf and horticulture experts detail best management practices in how to attain a great looking lawn and landscape with environmentally-friendly management strategies. What grasses and ornamental plants are best suited for your site? How do you establish or renovate a lawn or ornamental bed? How do you safely and effectively manage pests?

Jul 24, 2012

Lawn Recovery from Drought

Given the hit and miss nature of summer thunderstorms, many non-irrigated cool-season lawns in the mid-Atlantic enter summer dormancy following periods of 2 or more weeks of high heat, low humidity, and little to no rainfall. Just like winter dormancy in warm-season grasses, summer dormancy of cool-season grasses involves a loss of green color. What are appropriate strategies for water management when extended drying conditions arrive?



Jul 24, 2012

Improper Mowing of Lawns Can Impact Water Quality

Cutting turf and impacting water quality sound like completely unrelated topics. However, the improper handling of clippings is a very important way in which nutrients are inadvertently introduced into our water sources. When you make those first few passes with the mower along the street, do you think to throw the clippings back into the lawn, or, as many seem to do, into the street? Or worse still, have you



Subscribe

A lawn to Dye for

Watch Head Golf coach Jay Hardwick and turfgrass experts provide lawn care tips at the Pete Dye River Course of Virginia Tech.

Topics include watering, fertilizing, mowing, soil testing, dealing with weeds, choosing the right grass, and combating diseases. [More >>](#)

About

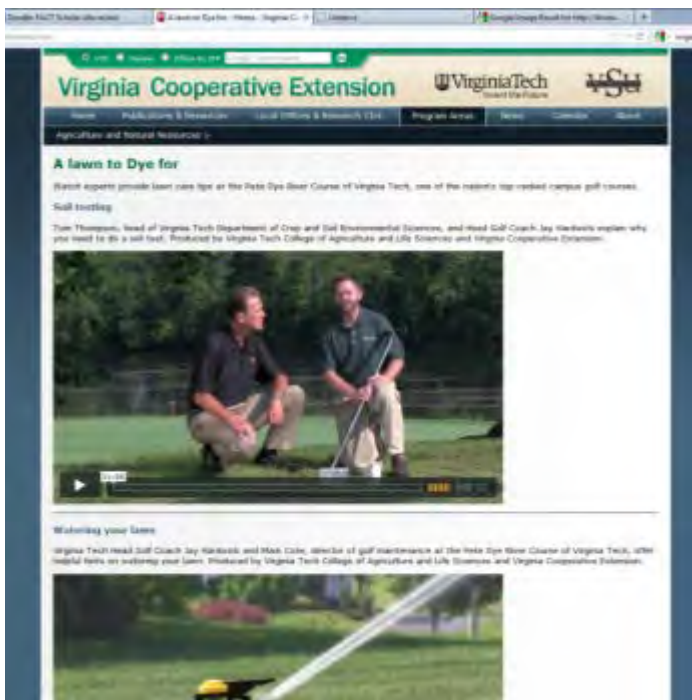
Contributors

iTunes U

Listen to the Turf and Garden Tips podcast on Virginia Tech on iTunes U.

Summer Lawn Management Tips

Summer heat and humidity present ideal conditions for warm-season grasses but plenty of challenges for cool-season species. Whether you are taking advantage of the



Please utilize Turf and Garden Tips, a weblog specifically developed for homeowners as a means of providing environmentally responsible lawn management information.

www.anr.ext.vt.edu/lawnandgarden/turfandgardentips/

Questions???



Turfgrass Short Course, Dec. 11-13, Fredericksburg Convention Center

Va Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, Jan. 28-30, Fredericksburg Convention Center

HRAREC Turfgrass Research Field Day, June 25, 2013, Virginia Beach

VT Campus Turfgrass Research Field Days, August 27-28, 2013, Blacksburg