

Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (SMR 1)

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The aim of these rules is to reduce the pollution of waters caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent such pollution occurring in the future.

They apply to land within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ).

If you farm land in a NVZ you must comply with the conditions of the NVZ action programme.

Full details of the NVZ Action programme can be found in the [NVZ guidance for farmers booklets](#) published on the Scottish Government website. Information on the revised NVZ locations (from 1 January 2016) can be found on the [NVZ pages](#) of the Scottish Government website.

These are the key requirements of the action programme rules:

You must:

1. prepare and implement a Fertiliser and Manure Management Plan before 1 March each year. This must contain the following elements if relevant to your business:

- Risk Assessment for Manures and Slurries (RAMS) map
- a calculation and record of the capacity of slurry storage facilities
- a calculation and record of the 170 kg/N/ha loading limit for livestock manure
- an Nmax (maximum permitted amount of nitrogen from any source that a crop can receive) calculation for each crop type grown on the farm, including grassland

2. keep adequate records for each year, containing the following information:

- the area of each field within the NVZ
- the soil type in each field
- the crop or crops grown in each field
- the quantity and type of chemical and organic fertiliser applied to each field and the date of application
- the number of livestock kept on the farm, detailing the species, the age category and the length of time kept on the farm
- the type and quantity of any livestock manure is moved onto or off of the farm
- the date that any livestock manure is moved onto or off of the farm
- the nitrogen content of any livestock manure moved onto or off of the farm
- the name and address of the person receiving or supplying the manure
- the quantity and type of chemical fertiliser brought onto the farm, used on the farm and retained on the farm

3. make sure that all storage facilities for livestock manure and silage effluent are maintained so that they are structurally sound and do not leak

You must not:

- exceed the Nmax for any crop type
- apply chemical fertiliser or organic manure with a high available nitrogen content during the relevant closed period
- exceed the relevant farm and field-based limits for organic manure
- apply any kind of nitrogen fertiliser when the land is waterlogged, flooded or covered by snow
- apply any kind of nitrogen fertiliser on soil that has been frozen for 12 hours or longer in the preceding 24 hours
- apply organic manure within 10 metres of any surface water
- apply organic manure within 50 metres of any well, borehole which provides drinking water
- store livestock manure in a temporary field heap for longer than 12 months

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