

# Information about Environmental Management Agricultural Operation Strategy or Plan Development Certificate (AOSPDC) (For Consultants)

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## Infosheet

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### INTRODUCTION

You need this certificate if you are preparing a Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS) or Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) for an agricultural operation for which you are not the owner, operator or employee. Certificate numbers are required on all NMS/Ps prepared by consultants.

### Certification Requirements

#### *Step 1 – Get a Certificate with Conditions*

This certificate allows you to develop a NMS/P for agricultural operations for one year from the date of issue of the certificate. After one year from the issue date, the certificate expires. During the one year period, consultants must fulfill the next stage of requirements identified in Step 2. You must complete the following requirements before applying for a certificate with conditions.

Courses: \*

- Fundamentals of Nutrient Management or Introduction to Nutrient Management
- Developing a Nutrient Management Strategy or Plan Using NMAN or Intro to NMAN
- Regulations and Protocols

You have two options for taking the Regulation and Protocols training:

#### **Option 1 - Regulation and Protocols Course – Online version**

The Nutrient Management Act, Regulation and Protocols course is also available online. The online course is equivalent to the in-class course, but allows you to work through the information at your own pace. It gives you an overview of the Nutrient Management Act, including key

definitions and requirements of the Act, Regulation and Protocols. You are also given tools to create your own Nutrient Management Strategy and/or Nutrient Management Plan.

Upon completion of the online Regulation and Protocols course, you will be required to take the online quiz and obtain a score of 70%. Participants are given three attempts at successful completion of the final quiz. If, after three attempts 70% is not obtained, the participant must contact the Nutrient Management Information Line to reactivate your access to retake the course.

The course has specific technology requirements. To participate in this course, we recommend you have a minimum 56K internet connection. Once you are connected, the course is viewable through a web browser, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator or Firefox. You should also have access to a printer.

The cost of the online course is the same as the classroom course.

#### **Option 2 - Regulation and Protocols Course – In-class version**

This classroom course is delivered by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and is offered on a seasonal basis. To register for courses, call the Nutrient Management Information Line.

\* Courses must be recent. Check with the Training, Education and Communications Unit to make sure you have taken a recent course. Courses are available in English and French.

## NMS/P

Complete and submit three fictitious NMS/Ps to the Environmental Management Branch for review. You must get fictitious case studies from the Environmental Management Branch, and complete them using the most recent version of NMAN.

Fictitious case studies are available in English and French.

### Exam

Write and pass the exam. The exam covers materials taught in the required courses and general knowledge areas specific to nutrient management planning. We encourage candidates to review the list of competencies published in “AOSPDC Core Competencies” document as a study guide for the exam. This document is available on the OMAFRA website at [www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA](http://www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA) by clicking on “Agriculture,” then “Nutrient Management Information,” and then “Certification and Training.” We schedule exam sittings two to three times a year. Candidates must pass the exam before applying for a certificate. Exams are available in English and French.

### Application for Certificate with Conditions

Once you meet the above requirements, you can apply to receive the AOSPD certificate with conditions. Application forms are available online at [www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA](http://www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA) by clicking on “Agriculture,” then “Nutrient Management Information,” and then “Certification and Training.” Forms are available in English and French.

### Step 2 – Fulfill Conditions of Certificate

Within one year of getting a certificate with conditions, candidates must complete the following requirements:

#### NMS/P

Candidates must complete and submit one NMS and one NMP for a real farm operation (any size) to the Environmental Management Branch for review. There will be a site visit conducted to confirm the information in the NMS/P is accurate. The NMS/P must be completed using

the most recent version of NMAN. Once the NMS and NMP are reviewed, the certificate candidate must apply to have the condition lifted from their certificate.

### Application for Certificate

Once you meet the above requirements, you can apply to have the condition lifted from their AOSPD certificate. Application forms are available online at [www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA](http://www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA) by clicking on “Agriculture,” then “Nutrient Management Information,” and then “Certification and Training.” Please include the certificate number when submitting a NMS/Ps to the Training, Education and Communications Unit of the Environmental Management Branch for review or approval.

### Other Considerations

Although it is not required, we recommend that individuals who carry the AOSPD certificate with or without conditions do the following:

- Carry errors and omissions insurance, and
- Participate in a Professionalism and Ethics course (offered through organizations such as the Ontario Institute of Agrologists).

Certificate holders are expected to keep up to date with the nutrient management legislation and actively pursue formal / informal learning opportunities to remain competent in the field of nutrient management. Staying up to date with the nutrient management legislation may include attending update sessions offered by OMAFRA on nutrient management.

Certificate holders are also expected to maintain professional standards, as outlined in “Performance Standards for Consultants Certified under the Nutrient Management Act, 2002.”

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*The information contained in this document is derived from the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 and O. Reg 267/03 as amended. Every effort has been made to make it as accurate as possible, but it is not authoritative. Please refer to [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca) or the official volumes printed by Publications Ontario for the authoritative text of the Act.*

**Nutrient Management Information Line:**  
1-866-242-4460  
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**[www.ontario.ca/omafra](http://www.ontario.ca/omafra)**