

# SENATE BILL 553

M4, M3

9lr1439  
CF HB 609

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By: **Senators Lenett, Brinkley, Colburn, Conway, Currie, Forehand, Frosh, Garagiola, Gladden, Harrington, Harris, Jacobs, Jones, Kasemeyer, Kelley, King, Madaleno, McFadden, Middleton, Miller, Munson, Muse, Peters, Pinsky, Pugh, Raskin, Robey, Stoltzfus, Stone, and Zirkin**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2009

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 18, 2009

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Chesapeake Bay Phosphorous Reduction Act of 2009**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a certain fertilizer from being labeled in a certain  
4 manner on or after a certain date; requiring a certain fertilizer to be marked  
5 with certain words in a certain manner on or after a certain date; prohibiting a  
6 certain person from selling or distributing certain fertilizer at a retail  
7 establishment on or after a certain date unless it is low phosphorous fertilizer;  
8 requiring certain manufacturers to reduce phosphorous levels resulting from  
9 the application of their lawn care products by a certain amount and on or before  
10 a certain date; prohibiting certain manufacturers from exceeding certain  
11 phosphorous levels in their lawn care products under certain circumstances;  
12 requiring certain manufacturers to report certain phosphorous levels annually  
13 to the Department of Agriculture after a certain date; authorizing the  
14 Department to adopt certain regulations; defining certain terms; and generally  
15 relating to fertilizer and phosphorus.

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
17 Article – Agriculture  
18 Section 6–201 and 6–210  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2007 Replacement Volume and 2008 Supplement)

21 BY adding to

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**EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.**

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike-out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Article – Agriculture  
2 Section 6–222  
3 Annotated Code of Maryland  
4 (2007 Replacement Volume and 2008 Supplement)

5 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
6 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

7 **Article – Agriculture**

8 6–201.

9 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

10 (b) A commercial fertilizer is “adulterated” if:

11 (1) Any poisonous, deleterious, or nonnutritive ingredient is added in  
12 sufficient amount to render it injurious to the health of plants, humans, or animal life  
13 or injurious to the environment;

14 (2) A valuable constituent is omitted or abstracted wholly or partially  
15 from it or any less valuable substance is substituted for it; or

16 (3) Its composition or quality falls below or differs from that which it  
17 is purported or is represented to contain by its labeling.

18 (c) “Brand” means the term, design, trademark, or other specific designation  
19 under which a commercial fertilizer or soil conditioner is distributed in the State.

20 (d) “Bulk fertilizer” means any commercial fertilizer distributed in a  
21 nonpackaged form.

22 (e) “Buyer’s mixture” means commercial fertilizer mixed on specific request  
23 of a purchaser according to a formula furnished by him.

24 (f) “Commercial fertilizer” means any substance containing a recognized  
25 plant nutrient used for its plant nutrient content and designed for use or claimed to  
26 have value in promoting plant growth, except unmanipulated animal and vegetable  
27 manure, marl, lime, wood ashes, and gypsum.

28 (g) “Custom–mix” means commercial fertilizer mixed on specific request of a  
29 purchaser according to a formula furnished by him.

30 (h) “Distribute” means to import, manufacture, produce, compound, mix,  
31 blend, barter, sell, offer for sale, consign, furnish, provide, or otherwise supply  
32 commercial fertilizer or soil conditioners as part of a commercial enterprise.

1 (i) "Fertilizer material" means a commercial fertilizer containing a  
2 recognized plant nutrient, which is used primarily for its plant nutrient content.

3 (j) "Grade" means the percentage of total nitrogen (N), available phosphoric  
4 acid ( $H_3PO_4$ ), and soluble potash ( $K_2O$ ) stated in whole numbers in the same terms,  
5 order, and percentages as in the "guaranteed analysis". In the case of any "specialty  
6 fertilizer" or "mixed-to-order fertilizer" guarantees may be stated in decimal fractions  
7 of whole numbers.

8 (k) "Guaranteed analysis" means the minimum percentage of plant nutrient  
9 claimed as follows:

10 (1) Total nitrogen (N), available phosphoric acid ( $H_3PO_4$ ), soluble  
11 potash ( $K_2O$ );

12 (2) For unacidulated mineral phosphatic materials and basic slag,  
13 both total and available phosphoric acid and the degree of fineness;

14 (3) For bone, tankage, and other organic phosphatic materials, total  
15 phosphoric acid;

16 (4) Additional plant nutrients, when claimed, shall be expressed in  
17 elemental form; and

18 (5) Potential basicity or acidity may be expressed in terms of calcium  
19 carbonate equivalent in multiples of 100 pounds per ton.

20 (l) "Gypsum" means any product that consists chiefly of calcium sulfate  
21 intended for use for agricultural purposes.

22 (m) "Label" means the display of all written, printed, or graphic matter on the  
23 immediate container or a statement accompanying a commercial fertilizer or soil  
24 conditioner.

25 (n) "Labeling" means all written, printed, or graphic matter on or  
26 accompanying any commercial fertilizer or soil conditioner, or the contents of any  
27 advertisement, brochure, poster or television or radio announcement used in  
28 promoting the sale of a commercial fertilizer or soil conditioner.

29 (o) "Lot" means a definite quantity of commercial fertilizer or soil  
30 conditioner, identified by name, grade, or code designation as certified by the  
31 Secretary.

32 (P) **"LOW PHOSPHOROUS FERTILIZER" MEANS FERTILIZER:**

33 (1) **CONTAINING NOT MORE THAN 5% OF AVAILABLE**  
34 **PHOSPHORIC ACID ( $H_3PO_4$ ); AND**

1           **(2) THAT HAS AN APPLICATION RATE NOT TO EXCEED 0.25**  
 2 **POUND OF AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID (H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>)/1,000 SQUARE**  
 3 **FEET/APPLICATION AND 0.5 POUND OF AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID**  
 4 **(H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>)/1,000 SQUARE FEET/YEAR.**

5           **[(p)] (Q)** A commercial fertilizer or soil conditioner is “misbranded”, if:

6                   (1) Its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;

7                   (2) It is distributed under the name of another product;

8                   (3) It is not labeled as required in § 6–210 of this subtitle and in rules  
 9 and regulations prescribed under this subtitle;

10                  (4) A fertilizer purports to be or is represented as a commercial  
 11 fertilizer or if it purports to contain or is represented as containing a fertilizer  
 12 material, unless the fertilizer material conforms to any definition of identity,  
 13 prescribed by departmental rules and regulations which give due regard to commonly  
 14 accepted definitions, such as those issued by the Association of American Plant Food  
 15 Control Officials, Inc.; or

16                  (5) Any word, statement, or other information, required to appear on  
 17 the label or labeling, is not placed on it prominently and conspicuously as compared  
 18 with other words, statements, designs, or devices in the labeling, and it is not in terms  
 19 that render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under  
 20 customary conditions of purchase and use.

21           **[(q)] (R)** “Mixed fertilizer” means a commercial fertilizer containing any  
 22 combination, blend, or mixture of fertilizer materials designed for use or claimed to  
 23 have value in promoting plant growth.

24           **[(r)] (S)** “Mixed-to-order” means commercial fertilizer mixed on a specific  
 25 request of a purchaser according to a formula furnished by him.

26           **[(s)] (T)** “Official sample” means any sample of fertilizer or soil conditioner  
 27 taken and designated as “official” by the Secretary.

28           **[(t)] (U)** “Percent” or “percentage” means percentage by weight.

29           **[(u)] (V)** “Registrant” means any person who registers a commercial  
 30 fertilizer or soil conditioner pursuant to the provisions of this subtitle.

31           **(W) “RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5–401**  
 32 **OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARTICLE.**

1           [(v)] (X)   (1)   “Soil conditioner” means any substance or mixture of  
2 substances intended for sale, offered for sale, or sold for:

3                   (i)   Manurial, soil enriching, or soil corrective purposes;

4                   (ii)   Promoting or stimulating the growth of plants;

5                   (iii)   Increasing the productivity of plants;

6                   (iv)   Improving the quality of crops; or

7                   (v)   Producing any chemical or physical change in the soil,  
8 except a commercial fertilizer, unmanipulated animal and vegetable manures,  
9 agricultural liming material, and gypsum.

10                   (2)   “Soil conditioner” includes but is not limited to materials such as  
11 compost, peat, vermiculite, or perlite, that are incorporated into the soil.

12           [(w)] (Y)   “Specialty fertilizer” means a commercial fertilizer distributed  
13 primarily for nonfarm use, such as home gardens, lawns, shrubbery, flowers, golf  
14 courses, municipal parks, cemeteries, greenhouses, and nurseries, and may include  
15 commercial fertilizers used for any research or experimental purpose.

16           [(x)] (Z)   “Ton” means a net weight of two thousand pounds avoirdupois.

17   6–210.

18           (a)   Each brand and grade of commercial fertilizer distributed in the State  
19 shall be accompanied by a legible label bearing the following information:

20                   (1)   The net weight;

21                   (2)   The brand and grade under which the commercial fertilizer is  
22 distributed;

23                   (3)   The guaranteed analysis giving the minimum percentage of every  
24 plant nutrient claimed to be contained in the fertilizer; and

25                   (4)   Name and address of manufacturer.

26           (b)   If distributed in bulk, a written or printed statement of the information  
27 required by subsection (a) of this section shall accompany delivery and be supplied to  
28 the purchaser at the time of delivery.

29           (c)   Any fertilizer mixed or blended according to a formula furnished by a  
30 purchaser shall be marked plainly or tagged with the words “buyer’s mixture”, or

1 “mixed-to-order”, or “custom-mix” together with a statement containing the following  
2 information:

3 (1) Net weight;

4 (2) The guaranteed analysis giving the minimum percentage of every  
5 plant nutrient claimed to be contained in the fertilizer; and

6 (3) Name and address of the manufacturer. In addition, the amounts  
7 or kinds of materials used in the formulation may be shown.

8 (d) A specialty fertilizer shall be labeled to contain all information required  
9 by subsection (a) of this section in a legible and conspicuous manner on at least one  
10 side of the container. If it does not appear on the face or display side of the container,  
11 it shall appear on the upper third of the side used.

12 **(E) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**  
13 **SUBSECTION, ON OR AFTER APRIL 1, 2011, A LAWN FERTILIZER WITH AN**  
14 **AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID (H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>) CONTENT GREATER THAN 5%:**

15 **(I) MAY NOT BE LABELED FOR USE ON ESTABLISHED**  
16 **LAWNS OR GRASS;**

17 **(II) MAY NOT BE LABELED WITH SPREADER SETTINGS; AND**

18 **(III) SHALL BE MARKED WITH THE WORDS “NOT FOR USE**  
19 **ON ESTABLISHED LAWNS OR GRASS” IN AT LEAST A THREE-QUARTER**  
20 **INCH FONT AND IN A LEGIBLE AND CONSPICUOUS MANNER ON THE FRONT SIDE**  
21 **OF THE CONTAINER.**

22 **(2) THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO SEED STARTER**  
23 **FERTILIZER FOR USE ON NEWLY ESTABLISHED LAWNS OR TURF.**

24 [(e)] (F) Each brand of soil conditioner distributed in the State shall be  
25 accompanied by a legible label bearing the following information:

26 (1) Net weight or other measure prescribed as satisfactory by the  
27 Secretary;

28 (2) The brand under which the soil conditioner is distributed;

29 (3) An accurate statement of composition and purpose; and

30 (4) Name and address of the registrant.

1           (A) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS  
2 SUBSECTION, ON OR AFTER APRIL 1, 2011, A PERSON MAY NOT SELL OR  
3 DISTRIBUTE FOR USE OR SALE AT A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT IN THE STATE ANY  
4 FERTILIZER INTENDED FOR USE ON ESTABLISHED LAWNS OR GRASS UNLESS IT  
5 IS LOW PHOSPHOROUS FERTILIZER.

6           (2) THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO:

7                   (I) A LANDSCAPING CONTRACTOR WHO IS LICENSED  
8 UNDER TITLE 8 OF THE BUSINESS REGULATION ARTICLE; OR

9                   (II) A SALESPERSON, EMPLOYEE, OR OTHER AGENT OF A  
10 LANDSCAPING CONTRACTOR WHO IS LICENSED UNDER TITLE 8 OF THE  
11 BUSINESS REGULATION ARTICLE.

12           (B) (1) ON OR BEFORE APRIL 1, 2011, A MANUFACTURER OF LAWN  
13 FERTILIZER WHOSE PRODUCTS ARE SOLD IN THE STATE SHALL REDUCE BY 50%  
14 FROM 2006 LEVELS THE AMOUNT OF AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID ( $H_3PO_4$ )  
15 RESULTING FROM THE APPLICATION OF ITS LAWN CARE PRODUCTS WITHIN THE  
16 STATE.

17                   (2) THE AMOUNT OF AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID ( $H_3PO_4$ )  
18 RESULTING FROM THE APPLICATION WITHIN THE STATE OF LAWN CARE  
19 PRODUCTS SOLD OR DISTRIBUTED BY A MANUFACTURER MAY NOT EXCEED AN  
20 AVERAGE OF 1.5% AVAILABLE PHOSPHORIC ACID ( $H_3PO_4$ ) IF, PRIOR TO APRIL  
21 1, 2010, THE MANUFACTURER DID NOT SELL OR DISTRIBUTE FERTILIZER IN THE  
22 STATE INTENDED FOR USE ON ESTABLISHED LAWNS OR GRASS.

23                   (3) BEGINNING IN 2011, A MANUFACTURER OF FERTILIZER  
24 WHOSE PRODUCTS ARE SOLD IN THE STATE SHALL REPORT THE POUNDS OF  
25 PHOSPHORUS IN ITS LAWN CARE PRODUCTS SOLD AT RETAIL LOCATIONS IN THE  
26 STATE TO THE DEPARTMENT AT THE END OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR.

27           (C) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS  
28 SECTION.

29           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
30 October 1, 2009.