
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1996 No. 217

**The Protection of Water Against Agricultural Nitrate
Pollution Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996**

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

“action programme” means an action programme established in accordance with regulation 6;

“chemical fertiliser” means any fertiliser which is manufactured by an industrial process;

“the Department” means the Department of the Environment;

“the Departments” means the Department of the Environment and the Department of Agriculture acting jointly;

“the Directive” means Council Directive [91/676/EEC](#) concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources⁽¹⁾;

“eutrophication” means the enrichment of water by nitrogen compounds, causing an accelerated growth of algae and higher forms of plant life to produce an undesirable disturbance to the balance of organisms present in the water and to the quality of the water concerned;

“fertiliser” means any substance containing a nitrogen compound or nitrogen compounds utilised on land to enhance growth of vegetation, and may include livestock manure, the residues from fish farms and sewage sludge;

“freshwater” means naturally occurring water having a low concentration of salts, which is often acceptable as suitable for abstraction and treatment to produce drinking water;

“groundwater” means all water which is below the surface of the ground in the saturation zone and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil;

“land application” means the addition of materials to land whether by spreading on the surface of the land, injection into the land, placing below the surface of the land or mixing with the surface layers of the land;

“livestock” means all animals kept for use or profit;

“livestock manure” means waste products excreted by livestock or a mixture of litter or waste products excreted by livestock, even in processed form;

“nitrate vulnerable zone” has the meaning given by regulation 3;

“nitrogen compound” means any nitrogen-containing substance except for gaseous molecular nitrogen;

“the Objectives” means the objectives specified in Article 1 of the Directive, that is to say—

- (a) reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources; and
- (b) preventing further such pollution; and

“pollution” means the discharge, directly or indirectly, of nitrogen compounds from agricultural sources into the aquatic environment the results of which are such as to cause

(1) O.J. No. L375, 31.12.91, p. 1

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hazards to human health, harm to living resources and to aquatic ecosystems, damage to amenities or interference with other legitimate uses of water.

(2) Other expressions used in these Regulations have the same meaning as in the Directive.

(3) The Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954⁽²⁾ shall apply to these Regulations as it applies to a Measure of the Northern Ireland Assembly.