



Commercial Manure Applicator Manual Report

Clean Water Legacy Funds Information

Gary Edwards, 651-201-6472
625 Robert St. N., St. Paul, MN 55155
www.mda.state.mn.us

12/30/15

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Background.....	3
Project Status.....	4

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 3.197, the cost of preparing this report was approximately \$300.00.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651/201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Executive Summary

The Commercial Animal Waste Technician Site (CAWT) Site Manager accelerated training manual project is complete and in use, and basic functions of the CAWT Applicator certification training project are also complete and in use. The online video certification training and testing are complete and were implemented October 15, 2015. These projects were funded by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) through contracts with the University of Minnesota Extension, Assessment Systems Inc., and iDream.tv. Project dollars were provided by the Clean Water Fund from the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment and matched with General Fund dollars.

Introduction

The goals of these projects were to accelerate implementation of improved training for commercial manure applicators and raise industry operating standards. The project is completed. It includes an updated site manager study manual and exam, educationally appropriate sets of applicator training videos, and infrastructure to support online certification and license procedures. Additional planned program enhancements will continue to add value. At present, the MDA has issued licenses to 242 CAWT Companies, 420 CAWT Site Managers, and 202 CAWT Applicators.

Background

In 2013, new legislation was passed that created a CAWT Site Manager License category. Site managers are trained to a higher level of skill, knowledge, and ability and they supervise the work of CAWT Applicators in the field. To meet the needs of applicants in this new license category, a revised CAWT Site Manager Study Manual was completed in January 2015. Components of this project included reviewing the existing manual which was more than 12 years old, identifying incorrect or outdated information, replacing information, and adding additional information as needed in a draft manual format. This work was done with consultation of a subject matter expert group and facilitated by the University of Minnesota Extension. This updated study manual is currently used by site managers that are preparing for their licensing exam.

In January 2015, the MDA implemented a CAWT Applicator License category to certify individuals that apply manure to the ground. Certification training for CAWT Applicators consists of online videos and an online examination that allows for licensure in approximately two hours. The learning objectives for the CAWT Applicator project were based on adapted content from the CAWT Site Manager Study Manual. The training consists of a series of videos that are viewed by those seeking certification for a CAWT Applicator license. After viewing the videos, a short test is administered. After successful completion, the technician is licensed. The entire process, including applying for the certification, payment of fees, viewing of the videos, testing and licensure is completed online. The MDA is currently issuing licenses to CAWT Applicators in a modified process while work on the final phase of this project is underway and completion is expected soon. The enhanced videos, with updated and aligned educational goals, are currently in use. The testing portion is last to be updated and while in use currently, will be enhanced soon.

The goal of online certification training was to develop additional, more technologically advanced modules. To accomplish this goal, the MDA started with five key topic areas identified by subject

matter experts. The subject matter experts included county feedlot officers, commercial manure industry leaders, extension educators, representatives of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and MDA fertilizer experts. The group then prioritized learning objectives, ranked by importance and tailored to meet the training needs of an applicator working in the field. These learning objectives were partially based on the content of the CAWT Site Manager Study Manual published in January 2015. The MDA staff then worked with a scriptwriter to translate previously developed training presentations into entry-level applicator-friendly dialogue. The script was reviewed and approved by MDA management and experts, as well as commercial manure industry association leaders. The learning objectives and script cover regulations applicable to CAWT Applicators, public and environmental protections, best management practices, and application methods and practices. This information applies universally to anyone applying manure to the ground. The MDA will subsequently publish this information in a written format as an operating guide for CAWT Applicators, and also as a reference guide for any manure applicator, including private pesticide applicators.

The contracted development company, Assessment Systems Inc. is building web-based applications that will allow applicators to create accounts and independently manage their licenses. These tools will enable an applicator to apply for a license and pay fees, schedule and take an exam, view training, and receive their license online. The entire process, when fully launched in 2016, will be computer based and will require approximately two hours.

The contracted production company, iDream, filmed on site for four days. They traveled to volunteer commercial manure applicators' homes and farms to film them doing their daily work. They documented and filmed an event sponsored by the Minnesota County Feedlot Association where over 30 companies and applicators demonstrated the latest technologies in application equipment. They also arranged for volunteers from the industry, the University of Minnesota Extension, the PCA, and the MDA to narrate to the modules.

Project Status

The revised CAWT Site Manager Study Manual and accompanying Exam are complete. The CAWT Applicator Video Training Project, companion exam, and the license process will be fully implemented when Assessment solutions are completed in January 2016. While the video training is a critical component of the certification process for CAWT Applicators, it is anticipated that these videos will be used by a wider audience. The videos located on the MDA YouTube site are rich, educational material that provide safety information, explain how to respond to an incident, describe the importance of equipment safety checks and reviews environmental protections through setbacks and application methods. All topics relate to broad audiences including private producers that apply their own manure. Placing the videos on the MDA YouTube channel, in 5 to 15 minute segments, makes this information deliverable in a user friendly interface to a wide audience. The videos can be viewed here:

<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/en/licensing/licensetypes/cawt/cawtapp.aspx>

MDA Commissioner Frederickson and staff hosted a recognition ceremony for cooperators and subject matter experts who have helped in the development of the improved training materials on November 19, 2015. Part of that ceremony was the kick-off and public release of the videos.