PARTNERSHIP for AG RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
sustainability | profitability | science

KEY FACTS FOR FARMERS v0814

Identifying Phosphorus Loss Hot Spots for Profits, Productivity and Water Quality

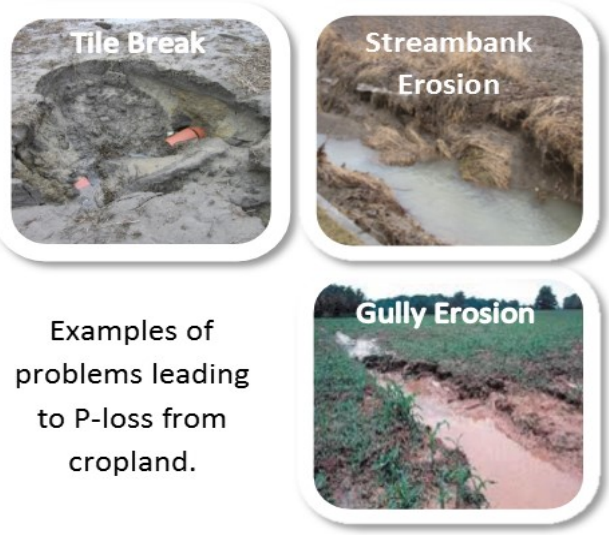
What are "hot spots" for resource loss?
Areas that can have much higher rate of fertilzer and soil loss include:

- Drainage tile breaks
- Streambank sloughing and erosion
- Concentrated water flows
- Path to streams, rivers, lakes
- High phosphorus (P) soil test levels

Special attention to these areas can preserve your investment in fertilizer and the long-term value of your land. Addressing these areas may prevent costly damage to machinery and expensive downtime.

What should I look for on my farm?

- Applying P on ground with soil tests above 40 ppm or 80 lbs./acre has low potential for improving yield, use your fertilizer dollars elsewhere.
- Gullies and other concentrated water flow and/or closeness to water increases the likelihood you will lose soil and nutrients. Slowing down water flows with filter strips and grassed waterways allow sediment and nutrients to settle out and stay on your fields where they benefit you.
- Tile breaks provide direct connection to ditches, streams, rivers and lakes for soil, nutrients and other agrichemicals that you want to keep for your crops. Fix tile breaks as soon as possible to preserve your investment and clean water.
- Soils with low infiltration rates will have a higher probability of runoff. Cover crops and high residue crops can protect soil from runoff.



Examples of problems leading to P-loss from cropland.

What can I do?

- Repair tile blowouts
- Repair and maintain streambanks
- Install grassed waterways on eroded slopes
- Draw down high P-test levels
- Install Water and Sediment Control Basins
- Install buffer strips & filter strips

Additional Resources:

Resource management practice collection
http://www.mda.state.mn.us/protecting/conservation/practices.aspx

Tile Drain Installation and Repair
http://www.in.gov/dnr/water/files/Sec5-2.pdf

Best Management Practices to Minimize Agricultural Phosphorus Impacts on Water Quality

http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/np/BestMgmtPractices/Best%20Management%20Practices.pdf

Check with your county NRCS office and Soil and Water Conservation District for financial assistance programs.

Add contact information here!