Temporary Suspension of Manure Storage Facilities

Superseded

Purpose	• Guide the temporary suspension of earthen liquid manure storage facilities • Protect groundwater and surface water from contamination
Audience	• Confined feeding operators, consultants and contractors
Relevant Legislation	• *Agricultural Operation Practices Act*

Introduction

This guideline outlines procedures for temporary suspension of a manure storage facility. Emphasis is given to temporary suspension of earthen liquid manure storage facilities (EMS) because of the increased risk posed by liquid manure.

Permits issued by the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) and deemed permits under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA) do not have an expiry date. Producers who temporarily suspend their operation will not see any change to their AOPA permit status.

Recommendations for temporary suspension of manure storage facilities

AOPA requires manure to be removed from a manure storage facility within one year of the time the storage facility ceases to be used, unless otherwise directed by the NRCB. Due to this requirement, it is important for operators to work with the NRCB to develop a plan for protecting liners and protective layers.

Operators who are considering a permanent shutdown or closure should contact the NRCB, and refer to Guideline Agdex 096-90, *Closure of Manure Storage Facilities and Manure Collection Areas*.

Operators are encouraged to review the status of a suspended manure storage facility with the NRCB or an Agriculture and Rural Development CFO extension specialist. This review allows the operator to discuss any issues regarding the suspended manure storage facility and their future plans for the manure storage facility.

During the suspension period it is important to maintain the integrity of manure storage facilities and collection areas (for example, manure pits or pen and barn floors). Maintaining structures in operating condition will minimize start-up costs and delays.

If the liquid manure storage has a synthetic liner, consult the liner's supplier and the NRCB for the best method of maintaining the integrity of the liner.

Additional recommendations for temporary suspension of earthen liquid manure storage facilities (EMS)

To protect EMS liners during temporary suspension:

- Leave enough manure or water in the EMS to help protect the liner from damage caused by freeze-thaw cycles and drying.
- Maintain the integrity of the liner sidewalls of the EMS (for example, prevent the growth of deep-rooted plants in or near the EMS).

- Maintain the existing surface water run-on control systems that divert surface water away from the EMS and prevent potential manure contamination.
- Prevent runoff from the storage facility. Any liquid in the EMS is considered manure and must be land applied in a manner that protects surface water and soil quality, as required by AOPA and its regulations.
- Continue EMS groundwater monitoring requirements as directed by the NRCB.

Definitions

- Manure – means livestock excreta, associated feed losses, bedding, litter, soil and wash water, but does not include manure to which the *Fertilizers Act* (Canada) applies.
- Manure collection area – means the floor of a barn, the under-floor pits of a barn, the floor of a feedlot pen and a catch basin where manure collects but does not include the floor of a livestock corral.
- Manure storage facility – means a facility for the storage of manure, composting materials and compost and a facility for composting but does not include such a facility at an equestrian stable, an auction market, a race track or exhibition grounds.

Superseded

For more information

Contact your nearest NRCB field office or an ARD CFO extension specialist (dial 310-0000 to be connected toll free)

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www.agric.gov.ab.ca/aopa

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Red Deer	(403) 755-1475
Lethbridge	(403) 381-5885

Natural Resources Conservation Board
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This guideline was developed by the Technical Advisory Group, a partnership between Agriculture and Rural Development, the Natural Resources Conservation Board and the agricultural industry.