

# Environmental board moves to allow farmer exemption

**HARRISBURG** - The Environmental Quality Board late last month approved changes in Department of Environmental Resources water quality management regulations to allow farmers who adhere to practices in a newly-developed manual on Manure Management for Environmental Protection to be exempted from some permit requirements.

The Environmental Quality Board is an independent 21-member panel of executive agency officials, legislators and citizens who approve all regulations to be administered by the Department of Environmental Resources.

The new manual was developed by a Work Group of the Department's Agricultural Advisory Committee as well as the Soil Conservation Service, Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Farmers Association and others. It describes techniques which can be used in managing manure from all species of animals while protecting the environment.

Under the regulations changes, farmers who use the practices outlined in the manual would be exempted from permits for storing and applying manure.

Nothing in the regulations or elsewhere requires farmers to use the manure management practices outlined in the manual and a farmer may choose to use practices other than those described.

Those choosing to use other practices, however, should check with the appropriate DER regional water quality management office before doing so.

Those who worked on the manual point out that there is no intention to force farmers into a storage-type management system and thus daily hauling still is

Yet despite the nutritional value of milk and its products, the "real" cost of milk has declined. In 1960, 13.1 minutes labor was required to buy one-half gallon whole milk at the grocery. In February 1974, 11.0 minutes were required to buy one-half gallon of milk. Or to put it another way, the "real cost" of milk bought in one-half gallon containers is no more than it was in 1966 or 1967.

acceptable as a manure management technique.

The material in the manual is planned to be sufficient to allow a farmer to design and complete a system without seeking professional help.

Farmers interested in obtaining a free copy of the manual should contact any Extension agent or DER regional water quality management office.

In other action the board moved to adopt new regulations which completely revise the State's regulations on solid waste management.

Approval for the revised solid waste management regulations came after the Board was briefed on comments on the proposed changes which had been received over the past three months and the reaction of the DER Division of Solid Waste Management to those comments.

Rather than making major substantive changes, the new chapter basically sets down in writing the guidelines and operating conditions which were considered and used by DER in the last several years.

The Environmental

Quality Board also approved modifications to the State's erosion and sedimentation control regulations and agreed to publish in the Pennsylvania Bulletin to receive public comment additional changes to the erosion and sedimentation control regulations, changes in regulations for Presque Isle State Park and proposed new topics for consideration in environmental master planning.

Adopted were changes in definitions in the erosion and sedimentation control regulations and a provision that any person or municipality who has applied to a conservation district for an erosion and sedimentation control plan or a conservation plan before July 1 will be considered in compliance with the regulation deadline of July 1, 1977 for plowing and tilling activities in agriculture.

Approved for publication to receive public comment were two provisions of the proposed erosion and sedimentation control regulations. The first indicates that in the case of agricultural plowing and tilling, a landowner is responsible for developing

and implementing the erosion and sedimentation control plan but may delegate his obligation to implement the plan or parts of the plan to a tenant or leasee by written agreement.

The other section revises the criteria for exemption from the permit requirement to say no permit is needed if an earthmoving activity affects or disturbs less than 25 acres or if an activity

involving more than 25 acres is subdivided into parcels of less than 25 acres and earthmoving is undertaken on non-contiguous parcels and the parcels are stabilized before contiguous parcels are disturbed.

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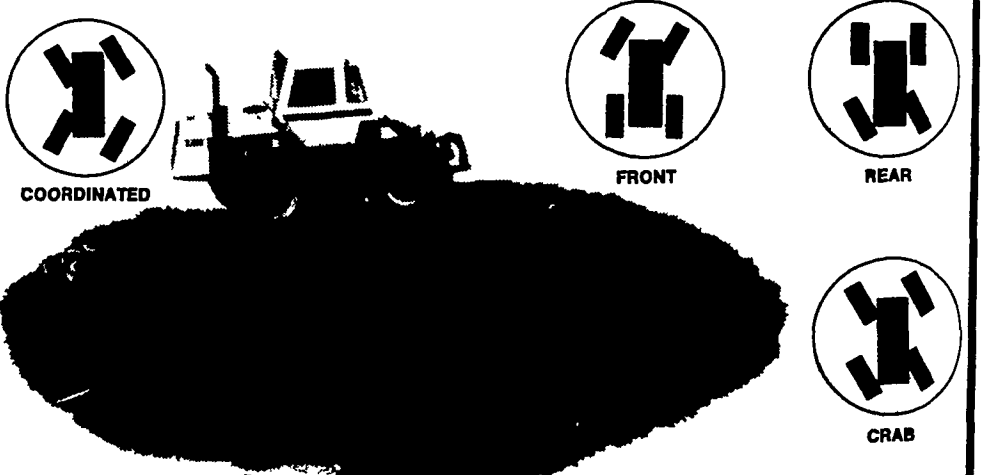
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