

Deadlines In Place For CAFO Permits

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently revised the Chapter 92 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting, monitoring and compliance regulations to include new permit deadlines for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The updated regulations were published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin Nov. 18, 2000. To date, DEP has issued 16 CAFO permits and 32 applications are in the review process.

CAFOs are large animal agriculture operations with more than 1,000 animal equivalent units (AEUs) and Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs) with more than 300 AEUs (currently, poultry operations that produce dry manure are exempt from CAFO permit requirements). CAOs are operations that fall under the Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Act for having more than two AEUs per acre of suitable cropland. An AEU is equal to 1,000 pounds of live animal weight.

All CAFO operations in Pennsylvania are required to obtain NPDES permits, and must apply and operate under either a General or Individual NPDES permit.

The following operations must obtain an Individual NPDES permit:

- Existing operations in special protection watersheds (watersheds that contain high or exceptional quality waters designated by DEP) with more than 1,000 AEUs; and
- CAOs in special protection

watersheds with more than 300 AEUs; and

- New or expanding operations with more than 1,000 AEUs; and
- Operations with direct discharges to surface waters.

The following operations, not located in special protection watersheds, qualify for a General NPDES permit:

- Existing operations with more than 1,000 AEUs;
- Existing CAOs with more than 300 AEUs;
- New or expanding CAOs with 301 to 1,000 AEUs.

In addition, operations with new or expanded manure storage facilities and more than 1,000 AEUs must obtain a Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law Water Quality Management Part II permit before operating.

Permit deadlines for CAFO operations are as follows:

- CAFOs operating on or before Nov. 18, 2000, with more than 1,000 AEUs, must apply for NPDES coverage by May 18;
- All other CAFOs operating on or before Nov. 18, 2000 must apply for NPDES coverage by Feb. 28, 2002;
- CAFOs beginning operation after Nov. 18, 2000 must apply for an NPDES permit before beginning operation.

Animal feeding operations not included in the categories listed above may request permit coverage under the CAFO regulations. All farming operations that handle or apply manure must comply with the practices described in the Manure Management for Environmental Protection manual found on DEP's Website (directlink "Nutrient Manage-

ment"), or obtain approval or a permit from DEP.

In addition, new manure storage facilities need to be designed and inspected by a Pennsylvania-registered engineer who must provide certification that the facilities are designed and constructed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Technical Guide standards.

DEP has been working to satisfy federal requirements for CAFOs under the Federal Clean Water Act and the National Pol-

lutant Discharge Elimination System. The Pennsylvania CAFO program is the result of extensive discussion by a work group made up of agricultural interests, environmental interests and government agencies, such as county conservation districts, the Department of Agriculture, the State Conservation Commission, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Pennsylvania CAFO program is built upon

the preexisting Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Act program.

Applications and information for CAFO Individual and General NPDES permits are available from Water Quality Programs in each of DEP's Regional Offices or through the DEP Website (directlink "CAFOs").

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2000 Crop Disaster Program Sign-up Continues

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Farmers and producers may continue to sign-up for program benefits under the 2000 Crop Disaster Program.

The previous deadline was May 4. No specific closing date has been determined at this point, said Alarie Fleming, chief of the production adjustment section in the Pennsylvania Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Office in Harrisburg.

Sign-up will continue to remain open until after further program regulations are developed and published particularly with respect to quality loss coverage. Following that, sign-up closure date may be announced, Fleming added.

Although no sign-up deadline

has been announced, Fleming stated that producers who experienced eligible crop losses are encouraged to provide acreage, production, and other required information to their local FSA office as timely as possible to finalize applications.

Appropriations Act 2001, included funding for the 2000 Crop Disaster Program (CDP). CDP

assistance is available to farmers who suffered crop losses in the year 2000 due to natural disasters. Farmers are eligible for compensation for 2000 crop losses directly attributed to adverse weather and related conditions.

Farmers may obtain further information at their local FSA office located in 50 agricultural counties across Pennsylvania.

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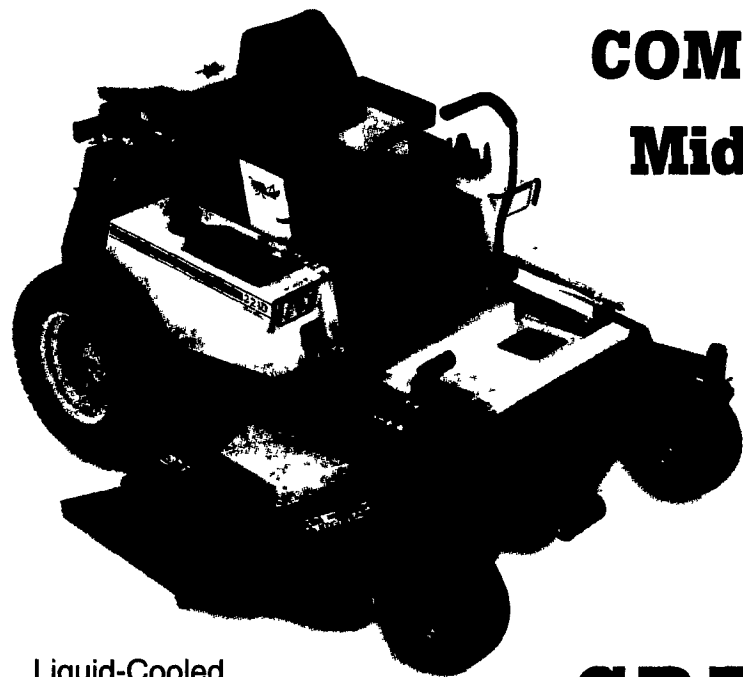
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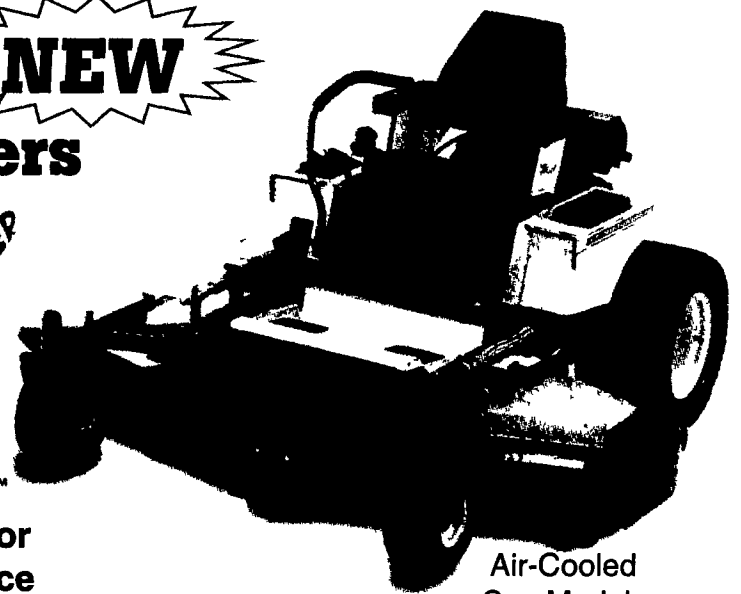


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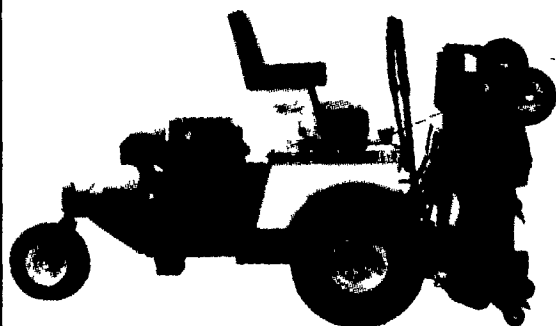
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