

CAFO Permitting: Know The Requirements

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Implementation of Pennsylvania's CAFO NPDES (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit program is well on its way. Any farm business with livestock (AFO Animal Feeding Operation) that has more than 1000 animal equivalent units (total live weight of animals divided by 1000 one AEU) should have applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) last year for either an individual or a general NPDES permit.

We interrupt this article for an important CAFO announcement. February 28 is another important date for any farm that is a CAO (Concentrated Animal Operation) under the Nutrient Management Act. CAOs with between 301 and 1000 AEUs must apply for a Pennsylvania CAFO NPDES Permit. To learn more: Contact your regional DEP office Visit DEP Web site at www.dep.state.pa.us/farmers/default.htm.

See article by Dodd and Abdalla in Farm Management Reports, November 2001. Contact your County Conservation District Office. Talk with a knowledgeable consultant. If you qualify, it is your responsibility to comply. Fines for noncompliance can be substantial. It takes time to develop the materials needed for the

entire permit application. The main portions of the permit include:

- Description and location of your AFO and all land that will receive manure.
- Approved NMP (Nutrient Management Plan.)
- Conservation Farm Plan (E&S plan for plowing and tilling.)
- Identification and implementation of appropriate BMPs (Best Management Practices) to control pollution.
- Certificate of design, installation and inspection of liquid manure storage structures by a professional engineer.
- A plan for regular inspection, record keeping, emergency response, training and reporting concerning various aspect of the manure handling and storage system.

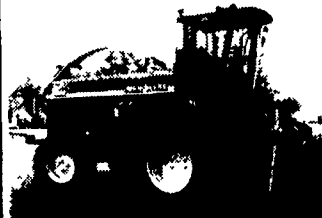
Long range business plans for any AFO should also consider existing CAFO requirements and the possibility that the animal numbers may change. Just like financing, building design and selecting a milking parlor the steps required to obtain an NPDES permit take time and effort.

Learning how to work with and abide with DEP regulations is becoming just as much a part of operating a dairy as following milk inspection rules.

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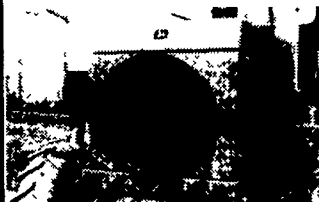
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