

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

WASTE TREATMENT LAGOON

(No.)
CODE 359

DEFINITION

A waste treatment impoundment made by constructing an embankment and/or excavating a pit or dugout.

PURPOSE

To biologically treat waste, such as manure and wastewater, and thereby reduce pollution potential by serving as a treatment component of a waste management system.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

- Where the lagoon is a component of a planned agricultural waste management system.
- Where treatment is needed for organic wastes generated by agricultural production or processing.
- On any site where the lagoon can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air or water resources.
- to lagoons utilizing embankments with an effective height of 35 feet or less where damage resulting from failure would be limited to damage of farm buildings, agricultural land, or township and country roads.
- A water supply exists that is adequate to fill the lagoon to half of the design treatment volume prior to operation and to maintain the design depth when the lagoon is operational.

CRITERIA

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ALL LAGOONS

Laws and Regulations. All Federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations

governing the construction and use of waste treatment lagoons must be followed.

Location. To minimize the potential for contamination of streams, lagoons should be located outside of floodplains. However, if site restrictions require location within a floodplain, they shall be protected from inundation or damage from a 25-year flood event, or larger if required by laws, rules, and regulations. Lagoons shall be located so the potential impacts from breach of embankment, accidental release, and liner failure are minimized; and separation distances are such that prevailing winds and landscape elements such as building arrangement, landforms, and vegetation minimize odors and protect aesthetic values.

Setback distances for lagoons shall be as per the Livestock Management Facilities Act, 510 ILCS 77/1 (LMFAct).

Lagoons should be located so they have as little drainage area as possible. If a lagoon has a drainage area, the volume of normal runoff during the treatment period and 25-year, 24-hour storm event runoff shall be included in the required volume of the lagoon.

Soils and foundation. A site investigation shall be performed as per requirements in the LMFAct. If the results of that investigation indicate the need for a liner, one shall be installed as per requirements in Section 506.205 of the Rules and Regulations for the LMFAct.

The lagoon shall have a bottom elevation that is a minimum of 2 feet above the seasonal high water table unless special design features are incorporated that address buoyant forces, lagoon seepage rates, and non-encroachment of the water table by contaminants. The water table may be lowered by use of perimeter drains to meet this requirement.

<p>Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.</p>

Flexible membranes. Flexible membrane liners shall meet or exceed the requirements of flexible membrane linings specified in NRCS Practice Standard 521, Pond Sealing or Lining, Flexible Membrane Lining and Section 506.205 LMFAct Rules and Regulations.

Required volume. The lagoon shall have the capability of storing the following volumes:

- Volume of accumulated sludge for the period between sludge removal events;
- Minimum treatment volume (anaerobic lagoons only);
- Volume of manure, wastewater, and other wastes accumulated during the treatment period;
- Depth of normal precipitation less evaporation on the surface area (at the required volume level) of the lagoon and runoff to the lagoon during the treatment period;
- The greater of: (a) Depth of the 25-year, 24-hour storm precipitation on the surface area (at the required volume level) of the lagoon plus the runoff to the lagoon from a 25 year, 24 hour storm precipitation plus two feet of freeboard or (b) two times the depth of the 25-year, 24-hour storm precipitation on the surface area (at the required volume level) of the lagoon plus two times the runoff to the lagoon from a 25 year, 24 hour storm precipitation plus one foot of freeboard.

Treatment period. The treatment period is the detention time between drawdown events. It shall be the greater of either 60 days; or the time required to provide the storage that allows environmentally safe utilization of waste considering the climate, crops, soil, and equipment requirements; or as required by local, state, and Federal regulations.

Waste loading. Daily waste loading shall be based on the maximum daily loading considering all waste sources that will be treated by the lagoon. Reliable local information or laboratory test data should be used if available. If local information is not available, Chapter 4 of the AWMFH may be used for estimating waste loading.

Embankments. The minimum elevation of the top of the settled embankment shall be 1 foot above the lagoon's required volume. This height shall be increased by the amount needed to ensure that the top elevation will be maintained after settlement. This increase shall be not less than 5 percent. The minimum top widths are shown in Table 1. The side slopes of the settled embankment shall not be steeper than 5 3 horizontal to 1 vertical, unless provisions are made to provide stability.

Table 1 – Minimum Top Widths

Total embankment Height, ft.	Top Width, ft.
15 or less	8
15 – 20	10
20 – 25	12
25 – 30	14
30 – 35	15

Excavations. Unless supported by a soil investigation, excavated side slopes shall be no steeper than 2 3 horizontal to 1 vertical.

Inlet. If freezing is not a problem, an open inlet, such as a concrete channel, may be used. If freezing is a problem, the inlet shall consist of a pipe having a minimum diameter of 8 inches and a minimum slope of 1 percent, except that a minimum diameter of 4 inches may be used for milking center wastes. The inlet pipe should terminate a sufficient distance from the shoreline to ensure good distribution. It should terminate far enough below the surface to avoid freezing or be provided with other protective measures. Cleanouts shall be provided at intervals not to exceed 200 feet. A water-sealed trap and vent or a similar device shall be provided on pipelines from enclosed buildings discharging into enclosed tanks or beneath the lagoon surface to prevent gases from entering the building. Inlet lines shall be of materials that will not separate at joints, that will be watertight and that can withstand weather, sunlight and expected loads.

Outlet. Outlets from the required volume shall be designed to resist corrosion and plugging. No outlet shall automatically discharge from the required volume of the lagoon.

Waste treatment lagoons shall not discharge to surface waters unless the owner determines through the state regulatory agencies that such discharge will not contravene established water quality standards.

Facility for drawdown. Measures that facilitate safe drawdown of the liquid level in the lagoon shall be provided. Access areas and ramps used to withdraw waste shall have slopes that facilitate a safe operating environment. Docks, wells, pumping platforms, retaining walls, etc. shall permit drawdown without causing erosion or damage to liners.

Sludge removal. Provision shall be made for periodic removal of accumulated sludge to preserve the treatment capacity of the lagoon.

Erosion Protection. Embankments and disturbed areas surrounding the lagoon shall be treated to control erosion. This includes the inside slopes of the lagoon as needed to protect the integrity of the liner.

Safety. Design shall include appropriate safety features to minimize the hazards of the lagoon. The lagoon shall be fenced around the perimeter and warning signs posted to prevent children and others from using it for other than its intended purpose.

Visual Resource. Vegetative screens or other methods should be used to shield the lagoon from public view and improve visual conditions.

Solids Separation. Solid/liquid separation treatment should be considered between the waste source and the lagoon to reduce loading. A minimum 7 days storage shall be provided, except for milking center wastes, where a minimum 3 days storage shall be provided.

Additional Criteria for Anaerobic Lagoons

Loading rate. Anaerobic lagoons shall be designed to have a minimum treatment volume based on Volatile Solids (VS) loading per unit of volume. The maximum loading rate shall be as indicated in AWMFH Figure 10-22 or according to state regulatory requirements, whichever is more stringent.

Operating levels. The maximum operating level shall be the lagoon level that provides the

required volume less the 25-year, 24-hour storm event precipitation on the surface of the lagoon. The maximum drawdown level shall be the lagoon level that provides volume for the required minimum treatment volume plus the volume of accumulated sludge between sludge removal events. Permanent markers shall be installed at these elevations. The proper operating range of the lagoon is above the maximum drawdown level and below the maximum operating level. These markers shall be referenced and described in the O&M plan.

Depth Requirements. The minimum depth at maximum drawdown shall be 6 feet. If subsurface conditions prevent practicable construction to accommodate the minimum depth at maximum drawdown, a lesser depth may be used, if the volume requirements are met.

Additional Criteria for Naturally Aerobic Lagoons

Loading rate. Naturally aerobic lagoons shall be designed to have a minimum treatment surface area as determined on the basis of daily BOD₅ loading per unit of lagoon surface. The required minimum treatment surface area shall be the surface area at maximum drawdown. The maximum loading rate shall be as indicated by AWMFH Figure 10-25 or according to state regulatory requirements, whichever is more stringent.

Operating levels. The maximum operating level shall be the lagoon level that provides the required volume less the 25-year, 24-hour storm event on the lagoon surface. The maximum drawdown level shall be the lagoon level that provides volume for the volume of manure, wastewater, and clean water accumulated during the treatment period plus the volume of accumulated sludge between sludge removal events. Permanent markers shall be installed at these elevations. The proper operating range of the lagoon is above the maximum drawdown level and below the maximum operating level. These markers shall be referenced and described in the O&M plan.

Depth requirements. The minimum depth at maximum drawdown shall be 2 feet. The maximum liquid level shall be 5 feet.

Additional Criteria for Mechanically Aerated Lagoons

Loading rate. Mechanically aerated waste treatment lagoons' treatment function shall be designed on the basis of daily BOD₅ loading and aeration equipment manufacturer's performance data for oxygen transfer and mixing. Aeration equipment shall provide a minimum of 1 pound of oxygen for each pound of daily BOD₅ loading.

Operating levels. The maximum operating level shall be the lagoon level that provides the required lagoon volume less the 25-year, 24-hour storm event precipitation and shall not exceed the site and aeration equipment limitations. A permanent marker or recorder

<p><u>Table 2- Potential Impact Categories from Breach of Embankment or Accidental Release</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surface water bodies -- perennial streams, lakes, wetlands, and estuaries 2. Critical habitat for threatened and endangered species 3. Riparian areas 4. Farmstead, or other areas of habitation 5. Off-farm property 6. Historical and/or archaeological sites or structures that meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historical Places
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shall be installed at this elevation. The proper operating range of the lagoon is below this elevation and above the minimum treatment elevation established by the manufacturer of the aeration equipment. This marker shall be referenced and described in the O&M plan.

Depth Requirements. The minimum depth at maximum drawdown shall be 6 feet.

CONSIDERATIONS

General

Lagoons should be located as close to the source of waste as possible.

The configuration of the lagoon should be based on the method of sludge removal and method of sealing.

Due consideration should be given to economics, the overall waste management system plan, and safety and health factors.

Considerations for minimizing the potential for and impacts of sudden breach of embankment or accidental release from the required volume

Features, safeguards, and/or management measures to minimize the risk of embankment failure or accidental release, or to minimize or mitigate impact of this type of failure should be considered when any of the categories listed in Table 2 might be significantly affected.

The following should be considered either singly or in combination to minimize the potential of or the consequences of sudden breach of embankments when one or more of the potential impact categories listed in Table 2 may be significantly affected:

- An auxiliary (emergency) spillway
- Additional freeboard
- Storage volume for the wet year rather than normal year precipitation
- Reinforced embankment -- such as, additional top width, flattened and/or armored downstream side slopes
- Secondary containment
- Water level indicators or recorders

The following should be considered to minimize the potential for accidental release from the required volume through gravity outlets when one or more of the potential impact categories listed in Table 2 may be significantly affected:

- Outlet gate locks or locked gate housing
- Secondary containment
- Alarm system
- Another means of emptying the required volume

Considerations for minimizing the potential of lagoon liner seepage

Consideration should be given to providing an additional measure of safety from lagoon seepage when any of the potential impact categories listed in Table 3 may be affected.

Should any of the potential impact categories listed in Table 3 be affected, consideration should be given to the following:

- A clay liner designed in accordance with procedures of AWMFH, Appendix 10D with a thickness and coefficient of permeability so that specific discharge is less than 1×10^{-6} cm/sec.
- A flexible membrane liner
- A geosynthetic clay liner (GCL) flexible membrane liner
- A concrete liner designed in accordance with slabs on grade criteria in NRCS Practice Standard 313, Waste Storage Facility, for fabricated structures requiring water tightness.

Considerations for minimizing the impact of odors

For sites located where odors are a concern, the following should be considered:

- Reduce loading rates of anaerobic lagoons to at least one half the values of AWMFH Figure 10-22.
- Covering the lagoon with a suitable cover.
- Using naturally aerated or mechanically aerated lagoons.
- Using composting in conjunction with a solid waste system rather than a liquid or slurry system.
- Using an anaerobic digester and biogas capture system.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be prepared in accordance with the criteria of this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An operation and maintenance plan shall be developed that is consistent with the purposes of the practice, its intended life, safety requirements, and the criteria for design. The

Table 3 - Potential Impact Categories for Liner Seepage

1. Any underlying aquifer is at a shallow depth and not confined
2. The vadose zone is rock
3. The aquifer is a domestic water supply or ecologically vital water supply
4. The site is located in an area of carbonate rock (limestone or dolomite)

plan shall contain the operational requirements for drawdown and the role of permanent markers. This shall include the requirement that waste be removed from the lagoon and utilized at locations, times, rates, and volume in accordance with the overall waste management system plan. In addition, the plan shall include a strategy for removal and disposition of waste with least environmental damage during the normal treatment period to the extent necessary to insure the lagoon's safe operation. This strategy shall also include the removal of unusual storm events.

Development of an emergency action plan should be considered for lagoons where there is a potential for significant impact from breach or accidental release. The plan shall include site-specific provisions for emergency actions that will minimize these impacts.