

Colorado General Discharge Permit Requirements

Trevor Tuell
Colorado Livestock Association

Over the last several years Colorado Livestock Association (CLA) along with other interested parties have been working with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to develop a General Discharge Permit for animal feeding operations, excluding those under the requirements of Amendment 14, that regulate the larger hog operations.

The CDPHE is delegated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits to animal feeding operations in Colorado. Membership of CLA has felt for years that producers need the protection of a permit. This permit allows operations to discharge during catastrophic event defined as a storm of large magnitude (e.g., tornado) or a series of storms occurring during a 10-day period that yields a total precipitation unlikely to occur but every 10 years.

The permit that costs \$84 per year is available at this time. Listed below are the requirements that must be met for the submittal of the complete permit application.

1. A professional engineer (P.E.) must certify that the containment capacity is available for either a 25 yr/ 24 hr, or 10-yr/ 10-day storm, whichever is greater.

2. There must be a designated discharge point for the pond system. This will entail the design and installation of a pond spillway or overflow pipe with flow measurement accurate to within 10%.

3. A pond volume designation must be determined coupled with a pond staff gage and the required storm containment volume must be marked on the staff gage.

4. The pond liner must be certified by a professional engineer that it meets the specified 1×10^{-6} cm/sec seepage rate.

These requirements will allow a permit to be issued. Within 18 months of the permit's issuance date the permittee must develop a Permit Nutrient Management Plan (PNMP). The PNMP must meet the permit prescribed nutrient budget process. This process will require each land application site to have a phosphorus risk assessment conducted. As well, the agronomic rate of application must be developed based on whether the site is nitrogen based or phosphorus based. Once a permit is issued, there will be monitoring and reporting requirements which will be a continual part of the permit process and a data management program.

CLA encourages producers to be environmentally responsible and apply for this permit. Contact Trevor Tuell with the Colorado Livestock Association for more information on the permit process. *EnviroStock, LLC*, an environmental consulting company owned in part by CLA, can provide engineering services needed to submit a permit application and complete the subsequent nutrient management information for permit compliance. Other company recommendations may be obtained from Dr. Jessica Davis, CSU Soil and Crop Sciences (970) 491-1913 .