

**Operation & Maintenance Plan  
Saturated Buffer (Code 604)**

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Landowner/Operator:

Date:

NRCS Service Center:

Conservation District:

Practice Location:

Tract/Field ID:

(Lat/Long or UTM Coord, or Sec/TS/R)

**Expected Lifespan**

The minimum expected lifespan of this practice is at least 15 years.

Saturated Buffers are components of a drainage water management system. The life of this conservation practice can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good inspection and maintenance program including the following requirements:

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Operation**

- The buffer acts as an absorption area for the removal of nitrates from subsurface drainage water. Follow the seasonal timing and water level management requirements of the Drainage Water Management Plan for which this practice is a component.

**Inspection and Maintenance**

- Inspect saturated buffers frequently for proper functioning.
- Inspect water control structures, distribution pipes, and the contributing drainage system for proper functioning.
- Maintain vegetation in the buffer area as appropriate for the design cover. Periodically inspect for and remove invasive plant species.
- Check distribution system for signs of clogging from roots of nearby woody vegetation. Remove woody vegetation, clean out distribution lines and repair as needed.
- Inspect the treatment area frequently and after major storm events for rills, small channels, or gullies. Repairs must be made immediately to restore eroded areas.
- When possible, conduct maintenance activities when the buffer area is dry to prevent rutting and compaction.
- The downstream limit of the buffer area shall be monitored periodically to see if polluted effluent is leaving the area. If polluted effluent is observed, make a thorough inspection of the buffer area to insure all components are working as designed. Make repairs as necessary. Contact your local NRCS office if polluted effluent continues to discharge from the buffer area.

## Specific Site Requirements