

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD
RHODE ISLAND**

FENCE

(Ft.)

CODE 382

DEFINITION

A barrier constructed to control animals or people.

PURPOSE

This practice is applied to facilitate the application of conservation practices by providing a means to control movement of animals and people.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animal or people movement is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve the purpose.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Laws and Regulations. All Federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, including local inland wetland agency regulations, governing the construction and use of this practice as well as setbacks from wells, surface water and property boundaries shall be followed. Planned work shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws and permit conditions and requirements. The landowner shall obtain all necessary permits prior to construction or any land clearing activities.

Fences shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements. Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of a high quality and durability. The type and design of fence installed will meet the management objectives and topographic challenges of the site.

Use acceptable fencing designs with standard or conventional barbed or smooth wire,

suspension, woven wire, or electric fences to control the animal(s) or people of concern and meet the intended life of the practice.

Height, size, spacing, and type of materials used will provide the desired control and management of animals and people.

For domestic livestock, the following fence criteria or equivalent shall be used:

Dairy Cows – Three or four wire

Heifers / Bulls – Four or five wire

Sheep / Goats – Woven wire

Hogs – Woven wire plus one bottom wire

Pleasure horses – Woven wire plus one top board or all boards

Combination of livestock – Woven wire plus one top and one bottom wire

Stockade fencing made of wooden posts and boards or recycled materials may also be installed providing it serves the intended resource concern and meets the required lifespan of the practice.

Height, size, spacing and type of posts will be used that best provides the needs for the style of fence required and is best suited for the topography of the landscape.

When fencing is installed to exclude wildlife from crops or for rotational grazing, the installation may be either fixed (permanent) or portable (temporary).

The minimum acceptable standard shall be the manufacturer's specifications where this standard does not cover the intended use. The State Conservation Engineer or designee shall approve these on a case by case basis.

The following criteria shall be used for deer exclusion applications:

Permanent Fencing for Deer

- A. High tensile electric fences have many different designs which meet construction guidelines concerning rigid corner assemblies and fence configurations are required. Typical life span is 20 to 30 years. Some specific variations of these type of fence are:
- Offset or double fence
 - Vertical deer fence
 - Slanted seven wire deer fence
- B. Woven wire fencing; eight (8) feet high woven wire with two (2) strands of smooth wire at nine (9) feet and ten (10) feet.

Temporary Fencing for Deer

- A. Baited temporary electric fencing with one (1) strand of 17 gauge smooth wire coated with peanut butter and vegetable oil.
- B. Temporary electrified polytape or polywire fencing with peanut butter / vegetable oil bait.
- C. Barrier fencing including individual wire cages or plastic tubes.

Acceptable design references for deer fencing include but are not limited to:

Publications 812, 814, 816, and 820 by the Cooperative Extension System, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV (<http://www.wvu.edu/~exten/infores/pubs/pest.htm>),

and publications and papers from the Wildlife Damage Management Program at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (<http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/wildlifedamage/>).

CONSIDERATIONS

The fence design and location should consider: topography, soil properties, safety and management of livestock, wildlife movement, location and adequacy of water facilities, development of potential grazing systems,

human access, landscape aesthetics, erosion problems, moisture conditions, flooding potential, stream crossings, and durability of materials.

Where applicable, cleared rights-of-way may be established which would facilitate fence construction and maintenance

Fences across gullies, canyons, or streams may require special bracing, designs or approaches.

Fence design and location should consider ease of access for construction, repair and maintenance.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose. Plans and specifications shall include construction plans, drawings, job sheets or other similar documents. These documents shall as a minimum, specify the requirements for installing the practice and include the kind, quantity and quality of materials to be used.

To the extent practical, specifications shall conform to NRCS National Engineering Handbook Parts 642 and 643 (Section 20).

AS BUILT DRAWINGS

As built drawings shall be prepared showing all fence elements as actually installed and a copy shall be provided to the owner / operator upon construction completion.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an ongoing maintenance program. At a minimum, the operation and maintenance plan should specify inspection of fences after storm events and in the spring of the year after frost has left the ground. Maintenance and repairs will be performed in a timely manner as needed.

Retain and properly discard all broken fencing material and hardware. All necessary precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of construction and maintenance crews.