

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

### CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

#### Agrichemical Handling Facility

(Number)

Code 309

#### DEFINITION

A facility with an impervious surface to provide an environmentally safe area for the handling of on-farm agrichemicals.

#### PURPOSES

To provide an environmentally-safe facility to:

- Store, mix, load, and clean-up agrichemicals;
- Retain incidental spillage or leakage; and
- Reduce pollution to surface water, ground water, air, and/or soil.

#### CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies where:

- The handling of agrichemicals creates significant potential for pollution of surface water, groundwater, air or soil and a facility is needed to properly manage and handle the chemical operation;
- An adequate water supply is available for filling application equipment tanks, rinsing application equipment and chemical containers as needed for the operation;
- Soils and topography are suitable for construction.

This standard does not apply to the handling or storage of fuels. This standard does not

apply to commercial or multi-landowner agrichemical handling operations.

#### CRITERIA

##### General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Use of this standard requires compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

The size of the agrichemical storage will be based on the maximum agrichemical use of the farm for a single growing season over the last 5 years.

The pad, hoses, pipes, valves, seals, connectors, filters, tanks, and related plumbing material must be compatible with the chemicals being handled and capable of withstanding the intended use.

Outlet drains are not permitted in the agrichemical collection, storage or handling areas.

Posts, pipes, hoses, discharge valves, or other devices may not pass through the floor, containment storage walls, or the sump.

When more than 60 gallons of Class I, II, or III flammable or combustible liquids or a single storage container larger than 5 gallons of Class I, II, or III flammable or combustible liquids are stored in an agrichemical handling facility (AHF), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 30, Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code, Chapter 4, will be followed. Storage

**Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service State Office, or download it from the Field Office Technical Guide for your State.**

cabinets or other remedies must be installed.

When the agrichemical handling facility is also used for agrichemical storage, provide sufficient space and designate a separate room or area from the mixing and loading area.

Any constructed AHF to contain a new permanent storage vessel (2,500 gallon single tank or total capacity greater than 7,500 gallons of fertilizer or pesticides of greater than 55 gallons stored more than 30 days) will have the plans and specifications reviewed by the Office of Indiana State Chemist (OISC) prior to NRCS construction assistance. The operator will register the AHF with OISC.

### **Criteria for Permanent Facilities**

**Location.** Locate the agrichemical handling facility as follows:

- Adjacent to or as near the chemical storage building as practical when chemical storage is not incorporated into the facility;
- As far as practical from streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, sinkholes, and water wells, with a minimum setback distance of 100 feet;
- Isolated and located downwind from residences and other buildings used to store feed, seed, petroleum products, or livestock with a minimum distance as required by local regulations;
- At sites that have not been used as stationary mixing/loading or storage sites in the past.

Locate the bottom of the facility a minimum of two feet above the seasonal high water table.

Artificially lowering the water table would be acceptable under the following conditions:

- The artificial drainage system is at least 20 feet from any portion of the agrichemical handling facility including mix/load and transfer pads.
- The drawdown is analyzed using the ellipse equation or equivalent to

illustrate the modified seasonal high water table.

- The artificial drainage system discharges to an observable sump with a shut off valve on the outlet pipe that may be closed in the event of an agrichemical spill in or around the agrichemical handling facility
- The design is approved by the State Conservation Engineer.

Locate above the 100-year floodplain elevation. However, if site restrictions require location within a floodplain, protect from inundation and damage from the 25-year flood event, or larger if required by laws, rules, and regulations.

**Storage Capacity.** Provide a minimum storage volume on the chemical-handling pad of 750 gallons or 1.25 times the volume of the largest storage or spray tank on the pad, whichever is greater.

For unroofed facilities provide storage on the pad as stated above or the volume of the 25-year, 24-hour storm, whichever is greater. Provide a means of storing or field applying, according to chemical label directions, the full storage volume within the 72-hour period following the storm.

Prevent outside runoff water from entering the facility.

**Rinsate Tanks.** Provide rinsate tanks of adequate number and size as needed for the type of operation, allowing for separation of non-compatible chemicals. The material type will be suitable for the type of chemical to be contained in the tank.

### **Manufactured Components.**

Manufactured tanks and components will be structurally sound, capable of withstanding all anticipated loads, and constructed of suitable materials for their intended use. Tanks will be sized based on a single farm owner or operator agrichemical need.

**Agrichemical Handling Pad.** Size the pad to accommodate the largest spraying equipment. Equipment access is allowed from more than one direction. Provide adequate space for maneuvering around equipment, a minimum of 2 feet for open

facilities and 4 feet for enclosed facilities. When practical base the minimum width of the mixing pad on the width of the spray equipment with the booms retracted.

Slope the pad to allow for drainage to a collection area or sump.

**Flexible Membrane Liners.** All flexible membranes will be certified by the manufacturer to be suitable for the intended use.

Design of the flexible membrane will be in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. All flexible membrane installations will meet the material and installation requirements of the plans and specifications provided for each installation and will be certified by the installer.

Minimum Thickness for Membranes	
Type	Minimum Thickness
HDPE	40 mil thickness
LLDPE	40 mil thickness
PVC	30 mil thickness
FPPR	45 mil thickness
EPDM	45 mil thickness

**Concrete Surfaces.** The NRCS Indiana Concrete Construction Specification will be enhanced as follows for concrete placed within this standard.

- The water cement ratio will not exceed 0.40.
- A minimum 28-day concrete compressive strength of 5000 psi.
- Air entrainment will be between 5 and 7.5 percent
- Use Type II or V Portland cement meeting the requirements of ASTM C150. Use concrete containing a supplementary cementitious material such as fly ash or natural pozzolan meeting the requirements of ASTM C618, silica fume meeting the requirements of ASTM C1240, ground blast furnace slag meeting the

requirements of ASTM C989, or blended supplementary cementitious materials meeting the requirements of ASTM C1697. Use concrete that is air entrained and continuously cured for a period of seven days.

- Any portion of the concrete that could potentially be subjected to continual exposure to caustic chemicals or the abrasive effects of prolonged spray, such as might occur from a leaking pressurized vessel, will be sealed with a chemically resistant coating. Use a non-vapor barrier coating unless measures are successfully implemented to prevent vapor formation. Coatings must be resistant to the agrichemicals that will be handled at the facility and be installed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.

**Agrichemical Collection.** Provide a collection area or sump with adequate dimensions for sediment removal and pump operation.

**Structural Design.** For the structural design, address all items that will influence the performance of the structure, including loading assumptions, storage tanks, material properties, and construction quality. Indicate design assumptions and construction requirements on the plans.

When using a roof/building to cover the facility, use minimum snow and wind loads as specified in the current edition of ASCE 7, *Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures*.

Locate footings below the anticipated frost depth unless measures are designed to accommodate frost/freeze conditions.

Permanent structures will be designed according to the criteria in the following references as appropriate:

- Timber - *National Design Specifications for Wood Construction*, American Forest and Paper Association;
- Steel – *Manual of Steel Construction*, AISC, American Institute of Steel Construction;

- Concrete non-liquid tight – Building Code Requirements for Reinforced Concrete, ACI 318, American Concrete Institute, for concrete structures; Guide for the Design and Construction of Concrete Parking Lots, ACI 330R, American Concrete Institute, for slabs-on-ground subject to distributed stationary loads, light vehicular traffic, or infrequent use by heavy trucks or agricultural equipment; Guide to Design of Slabs-on-Ground, ACI 360R, American Concrete Institute, for slabs-on-ground subject to regular or frequent heavy truck or heavy agricultural equipment traffic.
- Concrete liquid tight – Structural Engineering, NRCS National Engineering Manual (NEM) Part 536, for concrete structures; Requirements for Environmental Concrete Structures, Slabs-on-Soil, ACI 350 Appendix H, for concrete slabs.
- Masonry - *Building Code Requirements for Masonry Structures*, ACI 530, American Concrete Institute;

Slabs – Use a five (5) inch minimum concrete slab thickness. Base the required area of reinforcing steel on the subgrade drag theory in accordance with American Concrete Institute, ACI 360, *Design of Slabs-on-Grade*. When heavy loads are to be resisted and/or where a non-uniform foundation cannot be avoided, use an appropriate design such as ASAE EP514 “Design of Concrete Structures for Secondary Containment of Liquid Pesticides and Fertilizers”, and procedure incorporating a subgrade resistance parameter(s) such as ACI 360. If joints are necessary, a waterstop or pre-approved sealant will be used. A minimum of a 3-inch layer of gravel or crushed limestone will be provided as a uniform sub-base.

**Water Supply.** Provide an adequate water supply for mixing agrichemicals, rinsing tanks and containers, and for emergency health and safety needs as appropriate for the facility. Provide all pipelines, hoses, backflow prevention and other hardware as needed.

**Safety.** Design will include appropriate safety features to minimize the hazards of the facility. Provide warning signs, emergency eyewash station and other devices as appropriate, to ensure the safety of humans. Provide adequate ventilation at all times for enclosed buildings using natural or mechanical means.

**Vegetation.** Stabilize disturbed areas, as necessary, to prevent erosion. Refer to the Indiana (IN) Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Standard (342) Critical Area Planting and the Indiana Seeding Tool for seeding information. Vegetation must be resistant to herbicide drift and accidental runoff.

#### Criteria for Portable Facilities

The portable agrichemical handling facility is a manufactured portable device that can be easily moved from field to field and will meet the needs of the user.

**Pad.** The pad will be constructed of durable material that is chemically resistant for the intended agrichemicals. The minimum containment capacity of the pad is 1.25 times the volume of the largest individual agrichemical container or tank that will be located on the pad. Include a sump or other provisions for easy recovery of spilled liquid.

**Rinsing Devices.** Design rinse devices so that residual contents of agrichemical containers can be adequately rinsed directly from the container to the spray tank. Design the rinse system to operate from the nurse tank discharge pump or a separate pump that provides adequate pressure. Verify with the manufacturer of the facility that any pump to be used in pressure rising is compatible with the rinse device.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS**

The considerations section contains information that is optional to the planner.

For permanent facilities, the agrichemical handling facility may cause an increase in water use at the site from the mixing of agrichemicals and rinsing of agrichemical sprayers, containers and agrichemical-handling pad.

Consider providing a roof over permanent facilities.

Consider installing an apron at the facility entrance to minimize sediment transport onto the pad.

Consider providing a mixing platform for filling agrichemical sprayers.

For portable handling facilities consider using a top/bottom-loading valve with built-in check valve in the hose from the nurse tank to the spray tank. This will enable the operator to remain on the ground while filling the sprayer.

The installation of additional tanks above what was originally planned for the SCF may affect the structure's storage capacity and compliance with regulations.

Portable agrichemical handling facilities are manufactured items. Review plans and specifications submitted by the manufacturer to ensure that the proposed facility meets the requirements of this standard.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications will be prepared for the practice site. Plans will include the following:

- Plan view of facility layout with ingress and egress, pertinent elevations and location of water features.
- Profiles and cross-sections (where applicable) with soil boring.
- Soil boring locations and reports.
- Structure design data and details for all structural components.
- Quantities and bill of materials.
- Specification for impervious surface planned.
- Locations and details of safety features.
- Vegetative and seeding requirements.
- Temporary erosion control measures and plan during construction.

The following statement will appear on all construction drawings for AHF's:

Management of agrichemicals will be the responsibility of the owner/operator

and will be in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and Local laws and regulations.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

An operation and maintenance plan will be provided to and reviewed with the landowner. The plan will include the following items and others as appropriate.

1. The location and components of the facility including a brief description. Include the number and capacity of all fertilizer and pesticide tanks. A list of all stored products should be kept offsite. Material Safety Data Sheets may be included in the plan.
2. The facility will not be used for purposes other than the storing, mixing, loading, cleaning, and maintenance of materials and equipment used for agrichemical application.
3. Routine inspections and annual maintenance of the AHF is essential. Inspect all components of the AHF on a seasonal or at least yearly basis, unless indicated differently below. All problems will be addressed immediately.
4. The structural components such as the condition of concrete, curbing, sump, access roads, building structure, etc. will be inspected at intervals of not greater than six months. The size of the largest tank the facility was designed for should also be noted in the plans. Note the timing of inspections, conditions that would cause concern, and required actions as appropriate. Provisions for immediate repair of damage (such as by equipment, rodents and other) to a synthetic liner or earthen dike must be available at all times.
5. Inspect all tanks, valves, appurtenances and plumbing for leakage and load pads and operation areas at least weekly whenever the facilities are in use.
6. The proposed method of handling and disposing of rinsate, washwater, and spills.
7. A process for handling accumulated rainfall and sediment.

8. A strategy for cleaning surfaces between different agrichemical mixing operations.
9. A schedule of any required written inspection and maintenance reports.
10. The proper winterization of the facility.
11. The required safety signage.
12. The facility will be free of trash, debris and foreign matter.
13. A written Emergency Response Plan with safety procedures in the event of an accidental spill, exposure, fire, or other hazardous incident. Provide a list of safety equipment, contact names, and phone numbers. The emergency response plan should include a site visit and discussion with the local fire department. Emphasis will be made in the O&M plan on maintaining written inspection and maintenance reports in accordance to Indiana regulations. Reference will be made to periodic updates to the discharge response plan for the storage facility in the event of a spill.

## REFERENCES

40 CFR Part 165, Subpart E – Standards for Pesticide Containment Structures, 165.80 through 165.97

American Concrete Institute, *ACI codes*, Detroit, MI.

American Forest and Paper Association, *National Design Specifications for Wood Construction*, Washington, DC.

American Institute of Steel Construction, *AISC, Manual of Steel Construction*, Chicago, IL.

American Society of Agricultural Engineers, ASAE EP514, *Design of Concrete Structures for Secondary Containment of Liquid Pesticides and Fertilizers*, St. Joseph, MI.

American Society of Civil Engineers, ASCE 7, *Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures*, Reston, VA.

Daum, D. R., and D. J. Meyer. *Pesticide Storage Building*. Pennsylvania State

University, Agricultural Engineering Department.

Doane's Agricultural Report. *Chemical Containment Facilities*. Vol. 53, No 36-5.

Midwest Plan Service, 1995. *Designing Facilities for Pesticide and Fertilizer Containment MWPS-37*, Ames, IA.

Kammel, D. W., 1988. *Protective Treatment for Concrete*. Agricultural Engineering Department, University of Wisconsin.

Noyes, R. I., 1989. *Modular Farm Sized Concrete Agricultural Chemical Handling Pads*. Oklahoma State University, Agricultural Engineering Department.

Noyes, R. T., and D. W. Kammel, 1989. *A Modular Containment, Mixing/Loading Pad*. ASAE Paper No 891613, American Society of Agricultural Engineers, Winter Meeting, New Orleans, LA.

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, *Critical Area Planting*, Code 342, Conservation Practice Standards.

355 IAC 5 - Storage and Secondary

Containment of Pesticides

355 IAC 2 – Rules and Regulations Under the Indiana Commercial Fertilizer Law

Office of Indiana State Chemist (OISC), Fertilizer and Pesticide Sections

OISC publications including:

- Rules & Regulation of Indiana Commercial Fertilizer Law (Pub. # BC-1)

- Rules & Regulations of Indiana Pesticide Registration Law (Pub.# BC-2)

- Discharge Response Plan (Pub. # BC-15)

Purdue Pesticide Programs publications including:

- Pesticide and Container Management, 1992 (PPP-21)

- Pesticides and Their Proper Storage, 2001 (PPP-26)

- Managing Farm Chemicals, 2000 (PPP-50)

- Managing Farm Emergencies, 2003 (PPP-57)

International Association of Geosynthetics  
Installers membership directory is available  
by calling 615-255-6952, or by e-mail to:  
[iagi@ifai.com](mailto:iagi@ifai.com)