

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR
AGRICHEMICAL HANDLING FACILITY

CODE 309

Name _____

Ident. No. _____

Legal Desc. _____

County _____

A properly operated and maintained agrichemical handling facility is an asset to your farm. This structure was designed and installed to provide a safe environment on farm and ranch operations for the storage, mixing, loading, and cleanup of agrichemicals; the retention of incidental spillage; the retention of leakage; and the reduction of pollution to surface water, groundwater, air, and/or soil. The estimated life span of this installation is at least 15 years. The life of this installation can be ensured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program.

This practice will require you to perform periodic operation to maintain satisfactory performance. Here are some recommendations to help you develop a good operation and maintenance program.

General Recommendations

- Develop and maintain an emergency response plan that contains the telephone numbers for the emergency spill and poison center. All Materials Data Safety Sheets (MDSS) should be attached to the emergency response plan. The emergency response plan is to be located at the agrichemical handling facility.
- The agrichemical handling facility should not be used for purposes other than the storing, mixing, loading, cleaning, and maintaining of materials and equipment used for chemical application. The facility shall be kept free of items not necessary for its intended purpose.

- Maintain a file with the required written inspection and maintenance reports that are conducted on a scheduled basis.
- Do not drain water used to wash the outside of the chemical application equipment (after field use) onto the chemical handling pad as a standard practice due to the probability of contamination by soil and crop trash.
- Sumps should be thoroughly cleaned between the mixing and loading of different chemicals. The resulting rinsate can be applied as a dilute chemical to a labeled site or used as make-up water for subsequent batches of the chemicals that are labeled for the same crop. The sump shall be pumped dry at the end of each day of operation.
- Sediment from a sump shall be removed with proper precautions taken to reduce exposure of the worker to any potential contaminants in the sediment. Sediment potentially containing pesticides is considered the same weight active ingredient as the formulated chemical being mixed. This sediment should be land applied to the target crop at a rate below the label recommendation. The sediment shall be removed from the sump prior to a switch from one chemical to another chemical.
- The rinsate tanks used for holding the sump discharge should be emptied as soon as possible. The rinsate can be applied as a dilute chemical or used as dilution water for subsequent batches of chemicals that are labeled for the same crop.

- Unless the facility is heated, the tanks, pipes, and hoses should be drained in the fall to prevent freezing of the liquids.
- Drain accumulated precipitation from the sump and dispose of it properly.
- Minimize the operation of any heavy equipment on the chemical handling pad.
- All fences, railings, and/or warning signs shall be maintained to provide warning and/or prevent unauthorized human or livestock entry.
- Immediately repair any damage due to vandalism, vehicles, or livestock that has been done to the structure, earthen areas surrounding the structure, or any appurtenances.
- Use appropriate personal safety equipment such as gloves, eye protection, and respirator when mixing and handling agricultural chemicals.
- **Do not allow human entry into any enclosed structure without safety equipment that includes ladders and breathing apparatus.**
- The agricultural handling facility should be inspected periodically to ensure proper operation. The inspection should include (but is not limited to) the following:
 - Cracks in the concrete pad and sump
 - Sealer on the interior surfaces of the pad, sump, and sidewalls
 - Operation of back flow prevention devices
 - Hoses, pipes, valves, connectors, filters, tanks, and related plumbing material
 - All lids, grates, and shields on openings to underground structures
 - Safety equipment
 - Electrical systems
 - Roof and structural integrity of facility
 - Access roads and ramps
 - Drainage around building
 - Labeling of rinsate storage tanks that will ensure proper methods for applying rinsate back to the land
 - Chemical inventory

Specific Recommendations for This Project

If you need additional technical assistance to implement the operation and maintenance plan for this structure, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at your local USDA Service Center (listed in the telephone book under United States Government).