



Helping People Help the Land

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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**TECHNICAL GUIDE
NOTICE #260 (electronic)**

Purpose: To transmit information regarding the electronic NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG).

Effective Date: This notice is effective upon receipt.

Notice of Changes

SECTION I. General References

Economic Cost Data

3. Average Component Costs and Cost Tools

The following cost tools and information was updated:

2012-2013 Custom Machine & Work Rate Estimates

2014 Cost Estimate Tool

These are to provide update to the tools to improve formulas and update data. Previous versions were archived.

4. Statewide Conservation Practice Cost

Typical Statewide Average Practice Costs were updated for 2014 and the previous version was archived. The **Cost Information Tool FOTG2014** was upgraded and the previous version was archived.

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DIST: All Holders of the Field Office Technical Guide

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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5. Conservation Program Contract Economics

The pdf files of the **2014 Payment Schedule Worksheets** for WHIP and EQIP have been added. These files provide information to explain the background for the cost basis used to develop program payment schedules.

Technical questions about the files should be directed to David Buland, Economist, Central Region Technical Support Center (817-509-3577) or Lynn Knight, Economist, East Region Technical Support Center (802-528-5152).

Michigan Technical Notices – Agronomy

Agronomy Technical Note #60 – Michigan Phosphorus Risk Index text was revised to be consistent with the January 2014 update of the Nutrient Management (590) conservation practice standard. The risk index itself has not been changed.

Technical questions should be addressed to Ruth Shaffer, Water Quality Specialist, at (517) 324-5239.

SECTION II. Natural Resources Information

Soils Information

The NRCS Soils Data Mart has been discontinued and all soils data is now housed at the national **NRCS Web Soil Survey** website.

Technical questions should be addressed to Dr. Marty Rosek, State Soil Scientist, at (517) 324-5241.

SECTION III. Conservation Management Systems

Conservation Activity Plans Technical Criteria

National Bulletin 450-14-4, dated January 30, 2014, provided clarification on issues associated with the Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) criteria for the **Agricultural Energy Management Plan Criteria – Landscape (AgEMP) (124)** and an **Agricultural Energy Management Plan Criteria – Headquarters (AgEMP) (122)**.

The CAP124 was revised to add the following clarifications:

In 2014, the CAP criterion for CAP124 was changed to reference American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) standard “Performing On-Farm Energy Audits (S612).” The S612 standard identifies requirements of an energy audit based on farm enterprise types. If “Field Crops” or “Fruit/Vegetables” enterprise types are the primary enterprise of the farm operation, a CAP124 will be developed. All other field enterprises identified in the S612 standard shall be developed as a CAP122.

The major activities identified in ASABE S612, Table 1, represent the minimum requirements of an audit. Additional items may be addressed assuming that the effort to include additional activities will be at the producer’s expense.

There has been a misconception that a pump test is required as the basis for completing an energy audit for the irrigation activity under a CAP124, AgEMP Landscape. This audit is to determine if increases in efficiency or decreases in energy use can be obtained. The depth of investigation should be appropriate to the importance of any one piece of machinery, such as a pump or a motor. A pump test is not a required part of an irrigation system energy audit, unless it is needed to determine total energy use or to identify a significant lack of efficiency.

Paragraph 2.B.3 in the FY 2014 CAP124 description has been revised to read in part:

3. Documentation of Baseline Current Energy Use: *The Landscape AgEMP will provide comprehensive documentation of the current energy resources (e.g., electricity, natural gas, diesel, gasoline, etc.) used for the production and storage for all field crops or fruits/vegetables for the entire farm (Table 1, ANSI/ASABE S612 JUL2009), the respective total current energy usage, and total cost data. The evaluation of current energy use shall address the current energy use for engine driven equipment used in the cultivation, irrigation, drainage, protection, and harvesting of agricultural commodities associated with the field production activities.*

This revision to the CAP124 does not impact current payment schedules.

Technical questions should be addressed to Rick Woodford, State Conservation Engineer, at (517) 324-5232.

SECTION IV. Practice Standards and Specifications

Conservation Practices

The following engineering conservation practice standards were updated:

Agricultural Secondary Containment Facility (710)

Fueling Facility, Above Ground Storage (713)

Agrichemical Handling Facility (309)

Changes were made to the well isolation distance criteria based on Michigan laws Part 127 and PA 399. The well isolation distance worksheets have been updated to include fuel storage facilities with well protection factors.

Technical questions on these engineering practice standards should be addressed to Rick Woodford, State Conservation Engineer, at (517) 324-5232.

Questions regarding eFOTG content management should be directed to Ruth Shaffer, Water Quality Specialist, at (517) 324-5239.



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