

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

FENCE

(Feet)

CODE 382

DEFINITION

A constructed barrier to animals or people.

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

PURPOSE

This practice facilitates the accomplishment of conservation objectives by providing a means to control movement of animals and people, including vehicles.

CONSIDERATIONS

(1) Kind and behavior of livestock and/or wildlife, (2) Location and adequacy of water facilities, (3) Topographic features, (4) Soil-site characteristics, (5) Location of livestock management, handling, and feeding facilities, (6) Needs for improving grazing management and the development of potential grazing systems, (7) Landscape resources, (8) Federal, state, or local fencing codes or regulations, (9) Whether permanent or temporary fencing will meet the needs, (10) Expected/needed lifespan of fence.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animal or human movement is needed.

Cultural resources will be considered when planning this practice. This practice has the potential for adversely affecting cultural resources. Compliance with GM 420; Part 401 during the planning process is necessary.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of a high quality and durability. Materials shall meet NEH Material specification 591. The type and design of fence installed will meet the management objectives and site challenges. Based on need, fences may be permanent, portable, or temporary. NOTE: Material and workmanship not included in standard must be equal to or exceed the standard and specifications.

Fence design and location should consider ease of access for construction, repair and maintenance. Refer to applicable standards (ex: 391 Riparian Forest Buffer, 393 Filter Strip) for specific guidance on fence location.

Fences shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements. The fence design and installation should have the life expectancy appropriate for management objectives and shall follow all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Where applicable, cleared rights-of-way may be established which would facilitate fence construction and maintenance. Avoid clearing of vegetation during the nesting season for migratory birds.

Height, number, and spacing of wires will be installed to facilitate control and management of the animals(s) and humans of concern. Height,

Fence construction requiring the removal of existing unusable fence should provide for the

Conservation practice standards are reviewed and revised periodically. To obtain the current version of this specification, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service or download the standard and specification from the electronic Field Office Technical Guide for Missouri.

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proper disposal of scrap materials to prevent harm to animals, people and equipment.

If electric fences are utilized, training areas should be used to condition livestock to fences. Select a well fenced area and construct an electric fence across, or around, the area to allow animals to come in contact with the electric fence. Normally, a minimum 12 hours of exposure to the electric fence is required. Most animals will be trained fully in 48 hours. When animals are approaching the fence with caution, they are trained. When using electric fence with sheep or goats make sure the sheep or goats have been clean shorn prior to being introduced to the fence.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for all fence types, installations and specific sites. Requirements for applying the practice to achieve all of its intended purposes shall be described.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Routine inspection of fences should be part of an on-going management program. Inspection of fences after storm events is needed to facilitate the function of the intended use of the fence. Maintenance and repairs will be performed as needed to facilitate the intended operation of the installed fence. Electric fences will be regularly checked to determine the voltage on the fence. If voltage is not sufficient, determine the cause and correct.

During dry weather, ground rods may need water applied to soil around them. Maintain proper tension on the fence wires. Clear brush and other vegetation from fence lines to reduce voltage loss. Remove fallen limbs. Overhanging trees and limbs should be trimmed or removed as needed to prevent their falling onto the fence.

Electrified flood gates must be maintained. Keep flood gates and fences clear of debris. During extended flooding periods, switch the flood gates off.

Remove and properly discard all broken fencing material and hardware. All necessary precautions

should be taken to ensure the safety of construction and maintenance crews.

REFERENCES

United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management and United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1988. Fences. Missoula Technology and Development Center.

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2005. Electric fencing for serious graziers. Columbia, MO.

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2003. National range and pasture handbook, revision 1. Washington, DC.

University of Missouri Extension, Missouri Agricultural Law Center, May, 2008, MU Guidesheet G810 - Missouri Fencing and Boundary Laws. Columbia, MO
<http://extension.missouri.edu/xplor/agguides/gecon/g00810.htm>