



NATIONAL HANDBOOK OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES

450 – NHCP

NOTICE 165

Purpose. This notice transmits new or revised national Conservation Practice Standards (CPSs), along with an updated index, for insertion into the National Handbook of Conservation Practices (NHCP). In addition, notes are included to highlight key changes made to each document.

Effective Date. This notice is effective upon receipt.

Explanation of Changes. New or revised national CPSs are as follows:

Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Application (Code 450) – The revision adds a purpose to the standard to “improve soil surface infiltration rate and minimize soil crusting to allow for uniform plant growth on irrigated land.” There was also criteria for this purpose added to the standard which sets the PAM application rate to not exceed 4 pounds per acre, as well as criteria for mixing and injecting the PAM.

Composting Facility (Code 317) – Revised language as needed to improve readability and clarify intent of criteria. Criteria was revised to include facility siting and design language. Two sections, “Criteria for Mechanically Assisted Composting” and “Power Supply,” were added.

Constructed Wetland (Code 656) – Revised language as needed to improve readability and clarify intent of criteria. Additional conditions related to bioreactors and saturated buffers were added. Added criteria under heading “Additional Criteria Applicable to Constructed Wetlands for Water Quality Improvement” to use design procedure recognized by the regulatory and academic conservation partners, and to select a design hydraulic retention time that will achieve the intended water quality results. Added consideration to address odor concerns near populated areas.

Critical Area Planting (Code 342) – Revised language as needed to improve readability and clarify intent of criteria. The purpose of stabilizing areas being degraded by the concentration of salts or other chemicals was deleted and is covered in other conservation practice standards. Critical slope criteria to stabilize banks, shorelines, and other areas was changed from 2:1 slopes to 3:1 slopes.

Drainage Water Management (Code 554) – The entire document was edited for clarity. Two purposes were removed: reduce wind erosion or particulate matter (dust) emissions and provide seasonal wildlife habitat. Significant additions and clarifications were made to most of the “General Criteria,” particularly instructions under “Control Elevation” and “Control Zone.” Similarly, changes were made to sections “Additional Criteria to Reduce Nutrient, Pathogen, and

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Pesticide Loading” and “Additional Criteria to Improve Productivity, Health, and Vigor of Plants.” The “Considerations,” and “Plans and Specifications” sections were rewritten.

Feed Management (Code 592) – Changes in format, stronger emphasis on feed management for pathogen control and odor and greenhouse gas mitigation, feed management by grouping of animals, as well as select wording changes are incorporated. The new version should be easier for NRCS field staff to use, and easier for producers to understand.

Field Border (Code 386) – Clarified the “Purpose” statements to be in alignment with NRCS resource concerns. Minor edits were made throughout the document for clarification purposes. Added the purpose “reduce excessive sediment to surface waters.”

Filter Strip (Code 393) – Practice purposes were revised. Minor editing was made throughout the document to clarify criteria. Noxious or invasive plants language removed since this is NRCS policy for all matters. Added criteria to remove phosphorus by harvesting above-ground biomass at least once each year.

Irrigation Land Leveling (Code 464) – This standard was updated to be more readable and formatted according to current standards. A “Design” section was added to the standard to provide current reference information. The “Operation and Maintenance” section was expanded to include more detailed information to the operator to ensure the practice will last longer.

Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (Code 443) – Very few substantial changes. Clarifying words and grammatical corrections make up the majority of changes. A criteria was added for “Application Efficiency and Distribution Uniformity,” directing users to the current technical guidance.

Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (Code 329) – Practice purposes edited to align with NRCS resource concerns. Added the purpose to reduce excessive sediment in surface waters. Made minor edits throughout the document to improve clarity. Removed the 2,000 pounds per acre of residue to increase plant available moisture as this is no longer needed for the erosion prediction tools in use at this time. The needed amount of residue now states 60 percent.

Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (Code 345) – Added to the purpose to reduce sheet, rill and wind erosion, and excessive sediment in surface waters. Made minor edits to improve clarity throughout the document. Added the criteria to document/determine the purpose to reduce sheet, rill and wind erosion, and excessive sediment in surface waters.

Pen and ink Changes to existing CPSs are as follows:

Denitrifying Bioreactor (Code 605) – The unit is changed from “Ea.” To “No.” Under “General Criteria Applicable to all Purposes,” in the equation, a “plus” sign replaces the “minus” sign. Under “Considerations,” the Practice Code for Nutrient Management is 590, not 554. The current date of the standard remains September 2015.

Waste Storage Facility (Code 313) – Under “Additional Criteria for Liquid Waste Storage Impoundments” in the “Outlets” paragraph, the words “flouts in” have been removed. Additionally, in “Conditions Where Practice applies,” the word “carcasses” was replaced by the word “mortality.” The current date of the standard remains May 2016.

Short Term Storage of Animal Waste and Byproducts (Code 318) – The unit is changed from “cubic yards” to “cubic feet.” The current date of the standard remains September 2014.

Filing Instructions. If a hardcopy of the NHCP is maintained, replace the “Contents” (pages i through vi, dated May 2016) with the revised pages found at <http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=22299>

Remove and archive, as appropriate, the following existing practice standards:

Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Application (Code 450), dated May 2011
 Composting Facility (Code 317), dated September 2010
 Constructed Wetland (Code 656), dated July 2010
 Critical Area Planting (Code 342), dated December 2013
 Drainage Water Management (Code 554), dated September 2008
 Feed Management (Code 592), dated September 2011
 Field Border (Code 386), dated December 2013
 Filter Strip (Code 393), dated December 2013
 Irrigation Land Leveling (Code 464), dated September 2010
 Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (Code 443), dated May 2011
 Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (Code 329), dated December 2013
 Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (Code 345), dated December 2013

This notice, and each of the conservation practice standards included with this notice, can be accessed electronically through the NRCS Web site at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/technical/cp/ncps/?cid=nrcs143_026849

Federal Register Notice.

NRCS published a notice to solicit public comments about how to improve specific agency conservation practice standards in the *Federal Register* on August 22, 2016, for a 30-day comment period. Comments from the public were accepted during the comment period.

Guidance to the States and the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas for complying with the provisions of the 1996 Farm Bill that require advertising for public comment prior to revising NRCS State-level technical guides can be found in Title 450, General Manual, Part 401, Subpart B, Section 401.19.

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