



Focus on CAFO General Permit

from Ecology's Water Quality Program

Which state agency is running the CAFO program?

In July 2003, the Legislature started transferring the CAFO Program from the Department of Ecology to the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

However, we are still in transition, with the Department of Ecology in charge of writing the CAFO general permit.

WSDA inspects CAFOs and works with them to solve any compliance problems.

Notice of issuance

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) has issued a general permit to cover Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO). The old dairy general permit expired in March 2005. Ecology proposed a first draft in December 2004. In February 2005, a court decision affected the federal CAFO rule. Ecology has revised the permit to reflect changes from the court decision. After a second public comment period, Ecology issued a final permit on June 21, 2006.

Appeal period

The terms and conditions of this general permit may be appealed. Appeals of the general permit must be made within 30 days of issuance or receipt, whichever is later. To understand how the appeals process works, you can see RCW 43.21.B or contact us.

Purpose of the general permit

The CAFO General Permit covers discharges of waste water from CAFOs to waters of Washington State. Under federal and state water quality law, a permit is required for the discharge of wastewater. The permit provides a way for CAFOs to comply with these laws. It requires CAFOs to develop a nutrient management plan to manage their manure. It also requires CAFOs to store and use manure in a way that will protect water quality.

For more information

The Department of Ecology has the permit, fact sheet, and application available. You can view and print copies by visiting our web page at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/cafo>. You can also have us mail you copies.

Contact

You are encouraged to contact us if you have questions, comments, or need us to mail you copies. The Ecology contact person is:

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