

STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK DISPOSAL POLICY AND PRE-APPROVED DESIGN AND OPERATIONS PLAN FOR EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK DISPOSAL

Issued by
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

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The state departments of Agriculture and Public Health and Environment are working cooperatively with local health departments and extension services to assist with the safe disposal of livestock carcasses.

Disposal of dead livestock is subject to CRS 25-1-612 which requires that every part of all dead animals to be buried by at least two feet of soil.

In addition to the above requirement, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment hereby pre-approves the following management practices as being protective of human health and the environment for the disposal of dead animals associated with the blizzards of late December 2006 and continuing winter conditions into January 2007. Entities complying with these requirements will be considered to have a pre-approved design and operations plan for the purposes of managing solid waste.

Landfilling/Burial Requirements:

- 1) No dead animals shall be placed in any body of water or seasonal creek or pond.
- 2) Surface water should be diverted from the pit utilizing an upgradient diversion berm or other method.
- 3) All dead animals must be buried at least 150 feet down gradient from any groundwater supply source.
- 4) In no case should the bottom of the burial pit be closer than five feet to the groundwater table.
- 5) Burial sites must be located more than one mile from any the residence of any person.

Note: When burying dead livestock, the Department encourages the addition of a layer of lime or quicklime below and above a carcass to accelerate the decomposition process. Overuse of lime should be avoided. If lime or quicklime is not available, burial without it is acceptable. Avoid contacting the skin with lime or quicklime as it is caustic and can cause severe burns.

Other disposal options exist for dead animal disposition, including:

- 1) Dead animals may be taken to any permitted landfill that will accept them.
- 2) Dead animals may be transported to rendering plants. Colorado currently does not have this type of rendering plant so transportation would be out-of-state.
- 3) Dead animals may be composted. If composting is planned, please consult with the Department at the contact information below. Composting will require a separate design and operations plan to be approved by the Department.

Other Best Management Practices and Information:

- Prior to burial or other disposition, it is recommended to: 1) arrange carcasses individually in rows and not on top of one another; 2) locate carcasses in the shade and out of sunlight; and 3) keep carcasses covered with snow to keep cold.
- Burial sites with fractured or cavernous bedrock or highly permeable soils or seasonal high water tables should be avoided.
- To minimize potential impacts to ground water, large numbers of animals (more than 10) should not be limed and buried together.
- Citizens with livestock carcasses on their property can contact their local health department, sanitarian or local CSU Cooperative Extension Office for additional advice.
- According to current estimates, the most severely impacted counties are Otero, Crowley, Baca, Prowers, Bent, Kiowa, Cheyenne and Las Animas counties.

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