

**LIVESTOCK AND LAND
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RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

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HEALTHY Livestock & Land



LIVESTOCK AND LAND



What are Best Management Practices?

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practices that you can use on your land to address concerns such as erosion, drainage, mud and manure. By successfully managing these issues you can drastically improve the health of your property and local natural resources.



In addition to supporting conservation, installing BMPs at your livestock facility can improve chore efficiency, benefit animal health and facility safety, enhance land aesthetics, improve neighborhood relationships and even increase property value.

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Manure Management

- 1) Managing stored manure:
 - a. Maintain buffer strips of vegetation between manure storage areas and waterways to filter sediments and absorb nutrients in runoff
 - b. Store stockpiled manure on flat ground
 - c. Locate manure stockpiles on an impervious surface (concrete pad or plastic tarp) to prevent leaching
 - d. Cover manure piles to prevent rainwater from picking up any contaminants and carrying them to surface and/or ground water
 - e. Remove stockpiled manure on a regular basis



- 2) Managing composting manure:
 - a. Compost piles should be kept moist and well aerated to speed decomposition and improve compost quality
 - b. Good compost can be accomplished using a bin, forced-air or windrow system
 - c. Proper composting requires manure pile temperatures above 131° F, ample moisture and frequent turning
 - d. Cover composting manure to prevent rain water from picking up any contaminants and carrying them to surface and/or ground water

- 3) Where adequate pasture area is available, proper land application of manure is a good management option (not advisable within 50 feet of waterways or 30 feet of small streams and drainage ways)



Pasture Management

- 1) Maintain pasture productivity by controlling the number of livestock and amount of time they spend on a pasture
- 2) Cross-fence pastures to allow rotation of grazing animals
- 3) Prevent bare areas from forming in pastures and allow time for re-growth. Graze grass to a height of 3-4 inches and allow re-growth to 6-8 inches before returning livestock to it
- 4) Use exclusionary fencing and limit grazing of riparian corridors
- 5) Create winter sacrifice areas to keep livestock off wet soils which will reduce mud and erosion

Paddock Management

- 1) Collect manure from uncovered paddocks daily, particularly during winter, and store in sheltered stockpile areas
- 2) During the dry season, moisten paddock areas after manure clean up to facilitate decomposition of residual waste
- 3) Prevent excess chemicals from grooming and health products from draining directly into waterways
- 4) Maintain buffer strips of vegetation between barnyards, paddocks, manure storage areas and waterways to filter sediments and absorb nutrients in runoff
- 5) Maintain proper grading in paddock areas to avoid pooling water and mud



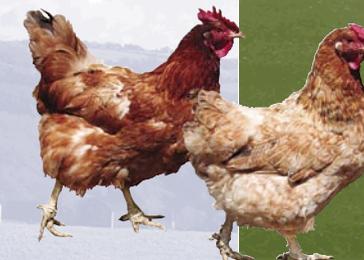
Drainage and Erosion Control

- 1) Site and design new facilities to address water quality concerns and minimize erosion
- 2) Install roof gutters and down spouts to divert clean runoff away from paddocks, pastures and manure storage areas
- 3) Construct/repair trails, arenas, roads, parking areas, drainage ditches and culverts to drain water in a non-erosive manner
- 4) Channel clean runoff around manure storage areas and paddocks
- 5) Use grassed ditches, berms and/or subsurface drains to divert contaminated runoff away from waterways to vegetated buffer areas
- 6) Grade and base rock paddock areas to minimize water-logging



Protect Sensitive Areas

- 1) Maintain animals in paddock or sacrifice areas to reduce trampling impacts on pastures and prevent compaction of wet soils
- 2) Locate paddock areas as far as possible from streams and slopes to reduce erosion and protect water quality
- 3) Locate fencing to keep animals a minimum distance of 50 - 100 ft from streams and 30 - 50 ft from smaller stream/drainageways
- 4) Maintain buffer vegetation near water bodies. Riparian corridors and wetland areas naturally filter contaminants, reduce erosion and provide excellent wildlife habitat
- 5) When crossing a stream, ride straight across. Manure in water harms aquatic life. Trampling degrades stream banks and increases sedimentation by destroying vegetative cover



Wild horses might roam up to twenty-five miles a day for food, water and shelter. Their continual movement disperses manure and urine and allows for regrowth of vegetation. With domestic horses, owners provide food and safe shelter. Consequently these practices can unintentionally damage delicate surface and ground water supplies and have detrimental effects on our local water resources, recreational activities and the environment.

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