

## Code of Practice for the Slaughter and Poultry Processing Industries

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

#### Q. Who does this Code of Practice apply to?

A. This Code applies to operators that slaughter and sell poultry or red meat for human consumption **and** have a waste discharge to the environment. Examples of waste discharges to the environment are disposing of wastewater via a drain/tile field or burying solid waste in an on-site landfill. Do not register under this Code if wastewater is discharged to a municipal sewerage system or if solid waste is picked up by a rendering company: these actions are not considered discharges to the environment.

#### Q. What if I already have a permit authorizing my waste discharges?

A. You may keep your permit and continue doing business as usual or you may opt to cancel your permit and register under the Code. There is no mandate requiring you to cancel a waste discharge permit and register under a Code of Practice.

### Introduction

If you operate a slaughterhouse, whether for red meat or poultry, you produce solid waste: feathers, hides, offal, bones, carcasses or parts of carcasses, manure etc. There are a number of ways of disposing of these waste products. One of them is burying them, also referred to as "landfilling".

Landfilling of solid waste from slaughterhouses is regulated by the **Code of Practice for the Slaughter and Poultry Processing Industries** (Code) under the Waste Discharge Regulation of the *Environmental Management Act*. You can download a copy of the Code as well as access background information by following this link: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/regs/codes/slaughter/index.htm>.

This guidance document is intended to assist slaughterhouse operators in understanding the requirements under the Code. For legal purposes, the *Environmental Management Act*, the Waste Discharge Regulation and the Code shall prevail. Other provincial and federal legislation, guidelines and best management practices that are not described in this document may also apply to slaughterhouse operations. For example, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has regulations for the handling of specified risk material that producers, transporters and processors must follow. See their website at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/bseesb/enhren/enhrene.shtml>.

Also, the Agricultural Land Commission has an information bulletin on the handling of red meat waste within the Agricultural Land Reserve. For further information see their bulletin at: [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/Information%20Bulletin/s/Red\\_Meat\\_Waste\\_info\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/Information%20Bulletin/s/Red_Meat_Waste_info_sheet.pdf).

If you slaughter livestock or poultry strictly for your **personal consumption**, you are exempt from the provisions of the Code and do not need to register. You are still required to ensure that your activities do not harm the environment.

For the purposes of the Code, a landfill is a burial site or trench used *only* for the disposal of solid waste from a slaughterhouse. You are not allowed to dispose of any other kind of waste, e.g., domestic garbage or yard waste, in it.

### Docking stations for mobile slaughterhouses

The owner of the land **where the waste discharge to the environment occurs** is required to obtain the waste discharge authorization (e.g., permit, registration under a code of practice), not the mobile operator.

The Code distinguishes between three types of slaughterhouse landfills:

1. Landfills operated by slaughterhouses that slaughter livestock or poultry strictly for **personal consumption** of the operator. These are exempt from the provisions of the Code. You are still required to ensure that your activities do not harm the environment.
2. Landfills that receive 5,000 kilograms/hectare/year or less of solid waste **and** are located in areas with an average precipitation of 600 millimetres/year or less.
3. Landfills that receive *more* than 5,000 kilograms/hectare/year of solid waste **or** are located in areas with an average precipitation of *more* than 600 millimetres/year).

5,000 kilograms would be the solid waste from approximately 17 cattle, 230 sheep, or between 5000 to 9000 chickens.

### General Registration and Recording Requirements for Slaughterhouses:

All slaughterhouses, except for those slaughtering strictly for the personal consumption of the operator, must:

Register with the Ministry of Environment (MOE). Registration forms will be available online via the following website link:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/regs/codes/slaughter/index.htm>. Forms can be printed off, completed and sent in by registered mail, courier or fax, or obtained from the Regional MOE office and returned to MOE headquarters in Victoria together with payment of the annual fee.

- Record how many tonnes of live weight of livestock or poultry are slaughtered per year (annual production). (If you are unable to weigh live animals, you can estimate live weight from carcass weight using Table 1.)

Table 1 Carcass Weights as Percentage of Live Weight	
Species	Carcass Weight
Cattle and Bison under 30 months	50 % of live weight
Cattle and Bison over 30 months	40 % of live weight
Hogs	55 % of live weight
Sheep and Goats	60 % of live weight
Poultry	74% of live weight

*Van Kleeck, R., Investment Agriculture Foundation, 2006*

- Record the maximum amount of liquid waste discharged to the environment from the slaughterhouse in cubic meters per slaughter day. **Note:** discharge of liquid waste into a municipal sewerage system is not considered a “discharge to the environment” and you are not required to register for that liquid waste.
- Record how the liquid or solid waste will be disposed of (e.g., tile field, or landfill). **Note:** if the solid waste is picked up e.g., by a rendering company, this is not considered a “discharge to the environment” and you are not required to register for that solid waste.
- Provide a list of any plans that may be required under this Code, e.g., groundwater monitoring and assessment plan, vector control plan or landfill closure plan.

- Keep records for at least 10 years and make them available to an officer upon request within two days.
- Notify a director in writing within 30 days after there is any change in information provided in your registration.

### Requirements for All Landfills

If you operate a landfill to bury solid wastes from your slaughterhouse, you must comply with the following requirements:

- You must control dust and odour caused by the operation of the slaughterhouse and the landfill.
- Every time you add a new batch of solid waste to the landfill, you must cover it with at least 0.15 meter (approx. 6") of low-permeability soil. Low-permeability soil has a hydraulic conductivity of  $1 \times 10^{-6}$  centimetres /second. Clay would be a type of low permeability soil.
- Between uses, the landfill must always be covered by an impermeable cover that will keep both precipitation (rain, snow, etc.) and vectors out of the landfill. Depending on circumstances, this could be as simple as a tarp, plywood, etc. A vector is any living organism that could transfer pathogens that cause disease from one place to another. This could be wildlife such as birds, rodents, larger scavengers like raccoons or bears, insects, domestic animals such as dogs and cats, or even humans.
- You must develop a plan for keeping vectors out of your landfill. Measures could include a suitable type of cover (as above paragraph), fencing against bears and other wildlife, etc.
- You must keep records of where the landfill is located, the dates on which you add solid wastes to it, and the types and quantities in kg. of solid wastes you add.

- A landfill must be closed by covering it with at least 1 meter (approx. 39 inches) of low-permeability soil. The soil covering must extend at least 0.3 meter (approx. 1 foot) above ground level, and at least 0.5 meter (approx. 20 inches) beyond the edges of the landfill.
- You must not add more waste to a landfill that has already been closed.

### Additional Requirements for Low Volume/ Low Precipitation Landfills

If you wish to landfill 5,000 kilograms/hectare/ year or less of solid waste *and* your slaughterhouse is located in an area with an average precipitation of 600 millimeters/year or less, then you don't need to engage a Qualified Professional to evaluate your landfill, if it meets the following minimum requirements:

- It is located on a site that has a slope of less than 0.5%.
- It is less than 2 meters wide.
- It is at least 1 meter below ground level.
- The bottom of the landfill is at least 4 meters above the seasonal high water table.
- It is located at least 50 meters from the boundaries of the property.
- It is located at least 100 meters from any surface water.
- It is located at least 300 meters from a residence, hotel, restaurant, school, church, public park, water supply well or water supply intake.
- It is located at least 30 meters from another existing or closed landfill.
- It is not located within the 200-year flood plain.

If you are unable to meet any of the above requirements, you must engage a Qualified Professional to evaluate the landfill and design a groundwater monitoring and assessment plan. You are required to comply with this plan, retain it and make the plan available to an officer within two days of a request.

### **Additional Requirements for High Volume/ High Precipitation Landfills**

If you wish to landfill *more* than 5,000 kilograms/hectare/year of solid waste *or* your slaughterhouse is located in an area with an average precipitation of *more* than 600 millimeters/year, then you need to

- engage a Qualified Professional to evaluate your landfill and design a groundwater monitoring and assessment plan. You are required comply with the plan.

At least 3 months before you intend to close your landfill, you must

- notify the director of the MOE through your regional Environmental Protection Office of the intended closure of the landfill;
- have a landfill closure plan prepared by a Qualified Professional. You must comply with this plan.

You are required to comply with all plans that are required to be completed under the Code, retain them and make them available to an officer within two days of a request.

A **Qualified Professional** is a person who

1. is registered in British Columbia with a professional organization, is acting under that organization's code of ethics, and is subject to disciplinary action by that organization, and
2. through suitable education, experience, accreditation and knowledge may reasonably be relied upon to provide advice within his or her area of expertise.

That area of expertise must be applicable to the duty or function to be performed.

Qualified Professionals may be found, for example, through the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists at <http://bcia.com/index.php> or the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia at <http://www.apeg.bc.ca/members/dirsearch.html>, or through an Internet search for landfilling consultants.

*For more information, consult our website at:*

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/regs/codes/slaughter/index.htm>

*or email the Environmental Management Branch at [envprotdiv@victoria1.gov.bc.ca](mailto:envprotdiv@victoria1.gov.bc.ca).*

*Note: This summary is solely for the convenience of the reader. The current legislation and regulations should be consulted for complete information.*