Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

Will My Operation Be Regulated?

In December 2002, EPA revised the Clean Water Act regulation for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, or CAFOs. This pamphlet will help you understand how the revised CAFO regulations might affect your operation.
Is my operation a CAFO?

Your operation is an animal feeding operation (AFO) if

☑️ You confine animals for at least 45 days in a 12-month period and
☑️ There’s no grass or other vegetation in the confinement area during the normal growing season

Your operation is a CAFO if

☑️ It meets the definition of an AFO and
☑️ The operation meets one of the following CAFO definitions

Large CAFOs

Your operation is a Large CAFO if it has at least

- 700 mature dairy cows
- 1,000 veal calves
- 1,000 beef cattle or heifers
- 500 horses
- 2,500 swine (each 55 lbs or more)
- 10,000 sheep or lambs
- 10,000 swine (each under 55 lbs)
- 55,000 turkeys
- 30,000 ducks (other than liquid manure handling systems)
- 5,000 ducks (liquid manure handling systems)
- 30,000 chickens (liquid manure handling systems)
- 125,000 chickens except laying hens (other than liquid manure handling systems)
- 82,000 laying hens (other than liquid manure handling systems)

Medium CAFOs

Your operation is a Medium CAFO if

A man-made ditch or pipe carries manure or wastewater from your operation to surface water or Your animals come into contact with surface water running through the area where they’re confined

And your operation has at least

- 200 mature dairy cows
- 300 veal calves
- 300 beef cattle or heifers
- 150 horses
- 750 swine (each 55 lbs or more)
- 3,000 sheep or lambs
- 3,000 swine (each under 55 lbs)
- 16,500 turkeys
- 10,000 ducks (other than liquid manure handling systems)
- 1,500 ducks (liquid manure handling systems)
- 9,000 chickens (liquid manure handling systems)
- 37,500 chickens except laying hens (other than liquid manure handling systems)
- 25,000 laying hens (other than liquid manure handling systems)

Designated CAFOs

No matter what size your operation is, if it is an AFO, it may be designated a CAFO. If your permitting authority inspects your operation and finds that it’s adding pollutants to surface waters, you might need a CAFO permit.

My operation is a CAFO. What do I do now?

You must apply for a permit. Contact your state permitting authority to find out how to apply. (See insert for contact information.)

What will the permit require me to do?

The permit will require you to control pollutants at your operation and keep them from getting into surface waters. See the other EPA CAFO pamphlets to learn more.

And don’t forget to contact your permitting authority for specific details.

What if my operation discharges only during large storms?

If you meet one of the CAFO definitions, you must apply for a permit even if your operation discharges manure or wastewater only when there’s a large storm.

When will the regulation affect my operation?

If you already have a CAFO permit, the regulation won’t affect you until your permit expires and you must reapply for a new one. If you’re applying for a permit for the first time, contact your permitting authority.