



GUIDELINE 31 - MANAGEMENT OF WASTE GRAINS, ELEVATOR SCREENS, AND SIMILAR AGRICULTURE WASTES

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Updated 03-2023

In response to state grain dealers and other interested persons, the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (Department) has developed this guideline for management of waste grains, elevator screens and similar food-related agriculture wastes. In North Dakota, as throughout the country, solid waste generators are looking at new, innovative ways of managing waste to avoid disposal. Increased regulation of solid waste landfills in the state resulted in closure of many sanitary landfills, thus encouraging an integrated approach to managing various waste streams. Reduction, reuse, and recycling are seen as preferred waste management techniques as opposed to incineration or disposal. Generators of waste grains or similar food stocks could evaluate reuse of these materials as livestock or wildlife feed, or other possible uses as long as no health, environment hazards or nuisances are created.

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture has concerns that management of materials containing noxious weed seeds are carefully controlled so as to prevent the spread of noxious weeds on agricultural lands. The Department's concern with management of waste grains and similar materials is that the materials are managed so as to not attract mice, rats, insects, or other vermin and that the materials are managed to reduce rotting conditions and its associated odor and health hazards. If reuse or recycling is not an option for waste grains, screens and similar materials, such materials may be hauled to a municipal solid waste landfill for proper disposal. State regulation requires municipal solid waste landfills to cover the waste materials at the end of each day's disposal, thus, minimizing the problems of odors, insects, vermin, and the spread of weed seeds. A list of municipal solid waste landfills can be found at <https://deq.nd.gov/foia/SolidWaste/ActiveSWLandfillsMSWLF.aspx>

Access to a municipal solid waste landfill may be difficult in a few areas of the state. In such cases, the Department may consider allowing the disposal of these materials at an inert waste landfill if special precautions are taken.

Inert waste landfills are normally not required to bury their waste at the end of each day. Thus, they are not suitable for disposal of food-related waste. The Department would consider a variance to allow inert waste landfills to take waste grains, screenings, etc., if such materials are properly disposed in a secure area and are **covered at the end of each day's disposal** with at least 6 to 12 inches of earthen material. The final cover over such areas must be at least 2 to 3 feet and the area reclaimed to promote proper native revegetation. The Department cautions that inert waste landfills considering disposal of these materials have access to adequate equipment to do the covering work and must have proper facilities and room to accomplish such tasks. Sometimes cooperation between the elevator owner, the inert waste landfill owner, and any contractors will help ensure proper disposal.

Persons working in agriculturally related industries should be knowledgeable of facilities in their area and of sound, solid waste management practices. Discussing issues of concern with solid waste facility owners/operators in advance is a good practice to ensure proper communication and avoid delays and misunderstandings.

The Department may, on a case-by-case basis, especially in the cases of emergencies, allow a variance for disposal of waste agricultural products on sites other than inert waste landfills. The

Department has a variance application that must be followed to allow such variances. Naturally, a variance does not supersede local zoning or landowner concerns.

Should anyone have any questions regarding these matters, please contact the Department at 701.328.5166. Noxious weed issues should be directed to the Department of Agriculture at 701.328.2231 or toll-free 1.800.242.7535.