

FACT SHEET: Disposal of Dead Livestock and Other Animal Carcasses

Flooding often kills wild and domestic animals. You may have dead animal carcasses on your property that need to be removed or destroyed. The Oregon Department of Human Services, in cooperation with federal and state agriculture agencies suggest the following measures be taken in disposing of dead animal carcasses during and after flood recovery:

1. Animal carcasses are considered to be solid waste under laws and regulations of the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Disposal of carcasses of small animals that died due to flood, rather than disease, may be done in regular garbage disposal systems. If you have large animals or large numbers of carcasses, we suggest you contact the closest DEQ office about disposal options. Also be sure if you plan to take carcasses to a landfill operation that you contact the operator of the landfill to make arrangements before you take or send carcasses to the landfill.
2. Burial is a good disposal option for single or small numbers of carcasses. If you bury carcasses be sure they are buried as soon after death as possible. Be sure that burial sites are at least 100 feet inside your own property lines, and that there are no streams or other surface waters, no wells or springs, or other water supply facilities within 100 feet of the burial site. Before burying large numbers of carcasses at any given site, be sure you have discussed the plan to do so with DEQ and with State Department of Agriculture (DAG). For small animals or for single carcasses, no approval needs to be obtained.
3. Burial sites should be selected so that carcasses are placed above the local water tables to ensure that surface water and groundwater aquifers are not hydraulically connected to the burial site.
4. When burying three or more animals in a common site the carcasses should be covered with agricultural lime.
5. Burial sites should be deep enough to ensure at least 24 inches (preferably 36 inches) of soil cover over the top of the topmost carcass.
6. Burning may be permitted at some sites, under some circumstances. Do not attempt to burn carcasses without specific approval of State DEQ and State DAG. Incineration of carcasses must be carefully designed in order to be successful. Efficient burning and supplemental fuel is essential to successful incineration.
7. Composting of carcasses may be feasible, but like incineration must be carefully

done to be successful and to avoid serious nuisances and conditions during composting. Do not attempt to compost large animal or large numbers of carcasses without assistance and approval from State DEQ and State DAG.

8. Commercial rendering of carcasses is the preferred method of disposal since the process results in usable product rather than being merely a disposal process. Obviously there are not enough rendering plants available in most areas to deal with the volume of dead animals that may result from regional disasters. It is recommended that you attempt to find an interested rendering operation for any large carcass or large number of carcasses, before you consider other disposal options. Check your local telephone and business directories for rendering services in your area.

For information about available waste disposal site, transfer stations, rendering plants or other disposal facilities in your area contact the nearest State DEQ office.

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Technical Advice and Information:

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