

RCW 70A.205.290 Qualified anaerobic digesters exempt from permitting requirements of chapter—Definitions. (1) An anaerobic digester that complies with the conditions specified in this section is exempt from the permitting requirements of this chapter. To qualify for the exemption, an anaerobic digester must meet the following conditions:

(a) The owner or operator must provide the department or the jurisdictional health department with at least thirty days' notice of intent to operate under the conditions specified in this section and comply with any guidelines issued under subsection (2) of this section;

(b) The anaerobic digester must process at least fifty percent livestock manure by volume;

(c) The anaerobic digester may process no more than thirty percent imported organic waste-derived material by volume, and must comply with subsection (3) of this section;

(d) The anaerobic digester must comply with design and operating standards in the natural resources conservation service's conservation practice standard code 366 in effect as of July 26, 2009;

(e) Digestate must:

(i) Be managed in accordance with a dairy nutrient management plan under chapter 90.64 RCW that includes elements addressing management and use of digestate;

(ii) Meet compost quality standards concerning pathogens, stability, nutrient testing, and metals before it is distributed for off-site use, or be sent to an off-site permitted compost facility for further treatment to meet compost quality standards; or

(iii) Be processed or managed in an alternate manner approved by the department;

(f) The owner or operator must allow inspection by the department or jurisdictional health department at reasonable times to verify compliance with the conditions specified in this section; and

(g) The owner or operator must submit an annual report to the department or the jurisdictional health department concerning use of nonmanure material in the anaerobic digester and any required compliance testing.

(2) By August 1, 2009, the department and the department of agriculture, in consultation with the department of health, shall make available to anaerobic digester owners and operators clearly written guidelines for the anaerobic codigestion of livestock manure and organic waste-derived material. The guidelines must explain the steps necessary for an owner or operator to meet the conditions specified in this section for an exemption from the permitting requirements of this chapter.

(3) Any imported organic waste-derived material must:

(a) Be preconsumer in nature;

(b) Be fed into the anaerobic digester within thirty-six hours of receipt at the anaerobic digester;

(c) If it is likely to contain animal by-products, be previously source separated at a facility licensed to process food by the United States department of agriculture, the United States food and drug administration, the Washington state department of agriculture, or other applicable regulatory agency;

(d) If it contains bovine processing waste, be derived from animals approved by the United States department of agriculture food

safety and inspection service and not contain any specified risk material;

(e) If it contains sheep carcasses or sheep processing waste, not be fed into the anaerobic digester;

(f) Be stored and handled in a manner that protects surface water and groundwater and complies with best management practices;

(g) Be received or stored in structures that:

(i) Comply with the natural resources conservation service's conservation practice standard code 313 in effect as of July 26, 2009;

(ii) Are certified to be effective by a representative of the natural resources conservation service; or

(iii) Meet applicable construction industry standards adopted by the American concrete institute or the American institute of steel construction and in effect as of July 26, 2009; and

(h) Be managed to prevent migration of nuisance odors beyond property boundaries and minimize attraction of flies, rodents, and other vectors.

(4) Digestate that is managed in accordance with a dairy nutrient management plan under chapter 90.64 RCW that includes elements addressing management and use of digestate shall no longer be considered a solid waste. Use of digestate from an anaerobic digester that complies with the conditions specified in this section is exempt from the permitting requirements of this chapter.

(5) An anaerobic digester that does not comply with the conditions specified in this section may be subject to the permitting requirements of this chapter. In addition, violations of the conditions specified in this section are subject to provisions in RCW 70A.205.280.

(6) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Anaerobic digester" means a vessel that processes organic material into biogas and digestate using microorganisms in a decomposition process within a closed, oxygen-free container.

(b) "Best management practices" means managerial practices that prevent or reduce water pollution.

(c) "Digestate" means both solid and liquid substances that remain following anaerobic digestion of organic material in an anaerobic digester.

(d) "Imported" means originating off of the farm or other site where the anaerobic digester is being operated.

(e) "Organic waste-derived material" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 15.54.270 and any other organic wastes approved by the department, except for organic waste-derived material collected through municipal commercial and residential solid waste collection programs. [2020 c 20 s 1186; 2009 c 178 s 1. Formerly RCW 70.95.330.]