

Chapter 16-25 WAC
DISPOSAL OF DEAD LIVESTOCK

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WAC

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WAC 16-25-010 Purpose. The purpose of this rule is to prevent the transmission of livestock diseases and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare and Washington state's livestock industry through the proper routine disposal of carcasses of livestock that have died because of disease. The statutory authority for the rule is found in RCW 16.36.010 and 16.36.092.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-010, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]

WAC 16-25-015 Applicability. This rule applies to the disposal of livestock that has died because of disease or an unknown cause.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-015, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]

WAC 16-25-020 Definitions. In addition to the definitions found in RCW 16.36.005, the following definitions apply to this chapter:

"Burial" means placing a carcass below the natural surface of the ground and completely covering it with soil.

"Carcass" means the body or tissues of a livestock animal that has died or has been killed other than by slaughter for human or animal consumption or commercial use.

"Composting" means the aerobic decomposition of organic matter under controlled conditions.

"Death from disease" means livestock that has died from a disease or an unknown cause.

"Emergency disposal" means disposal of carcasses ordered depopulated by the director or depopulated as a result of a reportable disease listed in WAC 16-70-010.

"Incineration" means the controlled and monitored combustion of carcasses for the purposes of volume reduction and pathogen control as approved by the department of ecology or local air pollution control authorities.

"Landfill" means a permitted facility, whether on-site or off-site, where solid waste is permanently placed in or on land, in accordance with chapter 70.95 RCW and chapters 173-350 and 173-351 WAC.

"Livestock" means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, and other species so designated by statute. This term does not include free ranging wildlife as defined in Title 77 RCW.

"Natural decomposition" means decomposition of carcasses through natural decay processes on the surface of the ground without cover material.

"Open burning" means the act of consuming or destroying a carcass by fire with or without the use of an accelerant.

"Rangeland" means a large open area for grazing of livestock in excess of one hundred sixty acres of contiguous usable grazing or timberland.

"Rendering" means the practice of using heat to convert dead animal carcasses and animal by-products into marketable products, such as meat and bone meal for animal feed, human food additives, or cosmetics.

"Routine disposal" means the disposal of the carcass of a livestock animal that died in the normal course of business. Routine disposal does not include carcasses of livestock ordered depopulated by the director or depopulated as a result of a reportable disease listed in WAC 16-70-010.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-020, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]

WAC 16-25-025 Routine disposal. A carcass must be disposed of within seventy-two hours of the time of death or discovery to avoid nuisance odors or disease. If weather conditions prevent burial within seventy-two hours and rendering, composting, landfilling, or natural decomposition cannot be accomplished, then the carcass must be buried as soon as the weather permits. The following are acceptable methods for the routine disposal of carcasses:

(1) **Burial.**

(a) A carcass may be disposed of by burial on the property where the livestock animal died if done with the approval of the property owner.

(b) A carcass must be buried to a depth so that no part of the carcass is nearer than three feet to the natural surface of the ground. Every part of the carcass must be covered with at least three feet of soil within twenty-four hours of placement in the ground.

(c) Carcass burial must be:

(i) At least three hundred feet from any well, spring, or body of surface water, such as a river, stream, lake, pond, or intermittent stream;

(ii) At least three hundred feet from any residence not owned by the owner of the livestock animal;

(iii) At least fifty feet from any property line between parcels under different ownership; and

(iv) Not in a low-lying area subject to seasonal flooding or within a hundred-year flood plain or in a manner that will impact groundwater.

(d) Each burial site is limited to one thousand pounds of carcasses or one livestock animal weighing more than one thousand pounds.

(e) Carcass burial is not allowed on a property of less than five acres, except for the burial of a single carcass weighing less than two hundred pounds. The maximum amount of land used for burial during any year is limited to ten percent of the property or one acre, whichever is greater.

(2) **Burning.** Open burning of carcasses is not allowed for routine disposal under RCW 70.94.775.

(3) **Composting.** Composting must be conducted in compliance with chapter 70.95 RCW and chapter 173-350 WAC.

(4) **Incineration.**

(a) Complete incineration of carcasses to a mineral residue must be performed in an approved incineration facility or by a mobile air curtain incinerator; and

(b) Appropriate permits must be obtained in advance through the local air pollution control authority or the department of ecology in accordance with requirements of chapter 70.94 RCW, Washington Clean Air Act.

(5) **Landfill.** Carcasses may be disposed of at a privately or publicly owned landfill with prior approval of the local health officer and the landfill operator, and permitted in accordance with chapter 70.95 RCW and chapters 173-350 and 173-351 WAC.

(6) **Natural decomposition.** A livestock animal that dies on private or state rangeland from causes other than a significant infectious or contagious disease agent may be left to decompose naturally on that property as long as the carcass:

(a) Is at least one thousand three hundred twenty feet from any well, spring, sinkhole, or body of surface water such as a river, stream, lake, pond, or intermittent stream;

(b) Is at least one thousand three hundred twenty feet from any residence not owned by the owner of the dead livestock animal;

(c) Is at least one thousand three hundred twenty feet from any public roadway;

(d) Is out of public view; and

(e) Is left to decompose on the land with the property owner's permission.

(7) **Digestion.** Digestion of carcasses may be accomplished only in a properly designed and sized carcass digester approved by the director.

(8) **Rendering.** Carcasses may be rendered only by a rendering plant licensed under chapter 16.68 RCW, Disposal of dead animals.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-025, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]

WAC 16-25-030 Disposal of livestock that have died from a reportable disease. The carcass of a livestock animal that has died from a reportable disease must be disposed of in consultation with the state veterinarian. The list of reportable diseases and reporting requirements are found in chapter 16-70 WAC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-030, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]

WAC 16-25-040 General emergency authority. If the state veterinarian determines there is an animal health emergency, the state veterinarian has the authority to specify the method of disposal and place additional requirements for the disposal of carcasses of livestock animals that die of disease or are euthanized to prevent the spread of disease.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 16.36.010, 16.36.092, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-10-086, § 16-25-040, filed 5/1/07, effective 6/1/07.]