

Meat processing and slaughter facilities: Environmental requirements

Meat processing and slaughter operations create liquid and solid waste that must be properly managed. This document provides guidance about environmental requirements for meat processing or slaughter facilities in Oregon. This includes processing of beef, chicken, and other meats. There are additional requirements for raising livestock. Please read each section below to determine which requirements may be needed.

Liquid waste disposal: Blood, wash water, and other liquids

1. Is the facility planning to discharge wastewater to a sewer system? Wastewater may include blood, wash water, or other liquid waste from the operations.

If yes: The facility should request permission from the sewer system operator (this is often a city) before discharging meat processing or slaughter waste. Most sewer operators have ordinances that restrict discharge of certain types of waste. The operator may require pretreatment of waste before discharge to the sewer system to prevent disruption to the wastewater treatment system. Additionally, if the facility plans to collect blood for composting, the facility may need a solid waste composting permit from DEQ. See more information about composting below.

If no: Proceed to the next question.

2. Is the facility planning to discharge wastewater to an onsite septic system?

If yes: Onsite septic systems cannot receive industrial or agricultural wastewater of any kind, including from slaughter facilities. This includes slaughter wash water that has passed through a grease interceptor. However, septic systems may be used to manage commercial and domestic wastewater if it is kept separate from industrial wastewater. Contact your county's onsite septic system staff for more information: <https://ordeq.org/septic-contacts>.

If no: Proceed to the next question.

3. Is this a stationary facility that will manage its own wastewater?

If yes: The facility may need to apply for a water quality permit from DEQ. Contact DEQ's water quality program for more information: <https://ordeq.org/waterpermit>. DEQ needs the following information to determine if a water quality permit may be needed:

- Estimated amount of wastewater generated per day and per year.
- List of sanitizers/cleaners that will be used for washdown.
- Description of how wastewater will be managed.

Translation or other formats

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800-452-4011 | TTY: 711 | deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov

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Depending on proposed operations, an individual water quality permit may be needed: a Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) permit if discharging to land or a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit if discharging to surface water. For meat processing facilities such as butchers with no slaughtering activities, the 1400B General Wastewater Permit may be appropriate. However, please note that the 1400B permit was designed for fruit and vegetable operations; meat processing facilities produce a much different type of waste and may not be able to meet the 1400B permit requirements: <https://ordeq.org/1400b>.

If no: Slaughtering establishments consisting of a truck, trailer, or other vehicle, and the equipment and utensils situated in or on the vehicle meet the definition of a mobile slaughtering operation. DEQ considers these facilities to be de minimis, and the facility may operate without a DEQ permit. De minimis operations are identified as being unlikely to cause adverse environmental impact.

4. Is the facility planning to collect blood for composting on site?

If yes: The facility may need a solid waste composting permit from DEQ. See more information in the composting and solid waste disposal section below.

If no: Proceed to next question.

Composting and solid waste disposal: Animal carcasses and other materials

1. Will the facility slaughter cows?

If yes: Solid waste from parts of the cow that have the potential to carry mad cow disease, known officially as bovine spongiform encephalitis, must be disposed of in a permitted landfill. This includes the brain, skull, eyes, and spinal cord from cows 30 months and older. Parts of the small intestine and the tonsils from all cows are required to be disposed of in a permitted landfill as well. This waste cannot be composted. For full details, see [OAR 340-093-0030\(43\)\(d\)](#) and [OAR 340-096-0140\(7\)](#).

If no: Proceed to the next question.

2. Will all animal carcasses and other solid waste be hauled off-site to a landfill or compost facility permitted to receive the waste?

If yes: If all waste is taken off-site to a permitted solid waste or compost facility, no solid waste permits are required at the processing or slaughter facility.

If no: If waste will not be hauled off-site, waste may be composted or processed in an anaerobic digester. Proceed to the next question to determine if a permit is required.

3. Will more than 20 tons of Type 3 feedstocks be composted - or - will more than 100 tons of any combination of feedstocks be composted?

Type 1 feedstocks include wood, yard debris, and plant waste.

Type 2 feedstocks include manure and bedding.

Type 3 feedstocks include dead animals, meat, eggs, and dairy products.

If yes: The facility must apply for a solid waste composting permit from DEQ unless the facility has a CAFO permit from ODA that covers the proposed composting operations: <https://ordeq.org/compost>. Also note that some materials must be removed from the carcasses of cattle and disposed of in

accordance with [OAR 603-029-0800](#) or [OAR 603-029-0810](#). The materials that cannot be composted include the brain and spinal cord from cattle 30 months of age and older.

If no: The facility does not require a DEQ solid waste composting permit, but must comply with the composting performance standards described at [OAR 340-096-0070](#). For more information, visit <https://ordeq.org/compost-rules> or contact the DEQ solid waste program in your region.

Raising livestock and managing animal waste

Do the facility operations involve the concentrated confined feeding or holding of animals, and meet one or more of the following conditions?

- a. In buildings or in pens or lots where the surface has been prepared with concrete, rock or fibrous material to support animals in wet weather; or**
- b. Have a wastewater treatment works; or**
- c. Discharge any wastes into waters of the state.**

If yes: The facility must apply for a Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Permit from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). More information on CAFO permits can be found here: <https://ordeq.org/cafo>.

If no: A CAFO permit may not be required. Check with an ODA livestock water quality specialist in your area: <https://ordeq.org/agwq>.

Additional requirements and considerations

Construction or industrial activities

- A stormwater permit from DEQ may be required prior to construction or industrial activities: <https://ordeq.org/stormwater>

Food establishments

- Most food establishments that slaughter, process, or sell raw meat need some type of meat license from ODA: <https://ordeq.org/foodsafety>.

Contact for more information

- Wastewater questions: Carl Makepeace, DEQ, carl.makepeace@deq.oregon.gov, 971-300-5142
- Compost questions: Bob Barrows, DEQ, bob.barrows@deq.oregon.gov, 503-705-1204
- CAFO questions: Christy Caldwell, ODA, christy.caldwell@oda.oregon.gov, 503-986-4699

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