

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 451 of 1994**

**324.3109d MAEAP-verified farms; applicable conditions; obligation to obtain permit not modified or limited; definitions.**

Sec. 3109d.

(1) Beginning 6 months after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this section, notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the following apply to MAEAP-verified farms:

(a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), if all of the following conditions are met, the owner or operator of the MAEAP-verified farm is not subject to civil fines under section 3115, but may be responsible for actual natural resources damages:

(i) A discharge to the waters of the state occurs from a portion or operation of the farm that is MAEAP-verified and in compliance with MAEAP standards.

(ii) The owner or operator acted promptly to correct the condition after discovery.

(iii) The owner or operator reported the discharge to the department within 24 hours of the discovery.

(b) Subdivision (a) does not apply if either of the following conditions occurs:

(i) The actions of the owner or operator pose or posed a substantial endangerment to the public health, safety, or welfare.

(ii) The director, upon advice from the interagency technical review panel provided for in section 8710, determines the owner or operator has previously committed significant violations that constitute a pattern of repeated violations of environmental laws, rules, regulations, permit conditions, settlement agreements, or orders of consent or judicial orders and that were due to separate and distinct events.

(c) If a MAEAP-verified farm is in compliance with all MAEAP standards applicable to the farming operation, the farm is considered to be implementing conservation and management practices needed to meet total maximum daily load implementation for impaired waters pursuant to 33 USC 1313.

(d) If a discharge from a MAEAP-verified farm that is in compliance with all MAEAP standards applicable to land application is caused by an act of God weather event, both of the following apply:

(i) The discharge shall be considered nonpoint source pollution.

(ii) If the discharge is determined by the director with scientific evidence provided by water quality data to have caused an exceedance of water quality standards, the farm, within 30 days of notification, shall provide to the department a report that includes details of conservation or management practice changes, if necessary, to further address the risk of discharge recurrence. The report shall state whether those conservation or management practices have already been implemented by the farm. Upon receipt of the report, the department shall review the report and respond within 30 days. The departmental response may include report acceptance with no further action required or may recommend environmentally sound and economically feasible conservation or management practices to prevent future discharges.

(2) This section does not modify or limit any obligation to obtain a permit under this part.

(3) As used in this section:

(a) "Act of God weather event" means a precipitation event that meets both of the following conditions:

(i) Exceeds 1/2 inch in precipitation.

(ii) Was forecast by the national weather service 24 hours earlier as having less than a 70% probability of exceeding 1/2 inch of precipitation.

(b) "MAEAP-verified farm" means that term as it is defined in part 87.

**History:** Add. 2011, Act 1, Imd. Eff. Mar. 9, 2011

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