

## 2.23 GENERAL DISCHARGE PERMITS for WASTEWATER DISCHARGES FROM Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and Maryland Animal Feeding Operations (MAFOs)

*Question 1: Do I own or operate an animal feeding operation?*

*Question 2: Will I discharge any manure, litter, or process wastewater to any place other than the sanitary sewer?*

### Why do I need this approval?

Animal Feeding Operation (AFO) means a feedlot or facility where: (a) Non-aquatic animals are confined, fed, and maintained for at least 45 days in any 12-month period; and (b) Crops, vegetation, forage growth, or post-harvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or facility. AFOs have the potential to discharge pollutants including but not limited to manure, poultry litter, or process wastewater from production areas. These discharges contain nutrients, which can enter the waters of the State causing algae blooms which deplete dissolved oxygen thereby reducing the beneficial uses of the water body. AFOs may be required to apply for the General Discharge (GD) Permit for AFOs. The classification as a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) or Maryland Feeding Operation (MAFO) is determined by a combination of factors including the number and type of animals, and whether the operation will discharge to waters of the State. Any chicken (other than laying hens) AFO with dry manure handling and between 75,000 and 99,999 square feet total house capacity is considered a MAFO unless there is found to be potential to discharge.

### What laws or regulations give MDE the legal authority to issue this approval?

FEDERAL: Federal Clean Water Act

STATE: Environment Article, Title 9, Subtitle 3;

COMAR 26.08.01 through 26.08.04.

### What is the process to get this approval?

- 1) (a) **For CAFOs:** Complete and submit: a Notice of Intent (NOI) form, a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) and submit the appropriate permit fee (See the "How much will this approval cost?" question and the Fee Table)  
(b) **For MAFOs:** Complete and submit: a NOI form and a CNMP.

- 2) Mail the completed forms and payment to:

**Animal Feeding Operation Division  
Maryland Department of the Environment  
1800 Washington Blvd, Suite 610  
Baltimore, MD 21230**

- 3) MDE reviews the submitted NOI to ensure that the operation can be covered by the GD Permit. This process may include a site visit.
- 4) If the NOI and the required plans are complete and acceptable (meet the minimum requirements), MDE will publish a 30-day public notice on MDE's AFO webpage. All applications for AFOs are subject to public notification requirements.
  - (a) **For CAFOs:** MDE may schedule a public hearing at its discretion regarding MDE's preliminary approval of the required CNMP if a written request is received within 20 calendar days after the date of publication on MDE's website. Interested parties may also submit written comments whether or not a hearing is requested. Any written comments concerning the preliminary approval must be received by MDE by the close of business within 30 calendar days of the publication of the notice on MDE's website. *Registration of a CAFO will depend on the outcome of the public hearing.*
  - (b) **For MAFOs:** MAFOs are not subject to a public hearing. However, interested parties may submit written comments. Any written comments concerning the preliminary approval must be received by MDE by the close of business within 30 calendar days of the publication of the notice on MDE's website. *Registration of a MAFO will depend on the comments received.*

5) MDE will notify the applicant in writing of coverage under the GD Permit.

**Are there any other requirements?**

To obtain coverage under the GD Permit, all requirements in the GD Permit must be met.

**How long should I expect it to take to get this approval once I submit a complete application?**

MDE has up to 180 days to approve an application.

**Once I get this approval, how long will it last?**

The approval coverage lasts until the established expiration date of the GD Permit or a maximum of 5 years.

**How much will this approval cost?**

A CAFO shall pay an annual permit fee. The application fee shall be submitted to MDE with the NOI Form.

CAFO Size	Large	Medium	Small	House Capacity 350,000 sq ft or More
Notice of Intent Fee (i.e. Application Fee)	\$1200	\$600	\$120	\$2000*
Annual Fee	\$1200	\$600	\$120	\$1200

*\*CAFOs with house capacity of 350,000 sq ft or more pay one-time upon submitting a NOI for a proposed new CAFO or modification of an existing CAFO proposing to expand its house capacity to 350,000 sq ft or more.*

**No Fees for MAFOs**

**Who do I contact with additional questions?**

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