

In accordance with the provisions of North Carolina General Statute 106-399.4, the following emergency measures and procedures have been implemented for the selection of mass burial sites for poultry carcasses in anticipation of catastrophic losses associated with a highly pathogenic avian influenza disease outbreak.

The overall goal of these measures and procedures is to eliminate, in a timely and biosecure manner, that is aesthetically acceptable, and environmentally responsible, all poultry carcasses that result from death or depopulation of poultry associated with a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) disease outbreak if burial on farm is being considered as a method for disposal. For the purpose of these measures and procedures, burial site means the disposal footprint, not the farm.

General Measures and Procedures:

1. A pre-incident site selection assessment, performed by a qualified individual, must be conducted to determine suitable disposal of carcasses by burial. Said process will prevent contamination of groundwater or surface water by either HPAI virus or conventional pollutants, such as dissolved solids, nitrate or ammonia from decaying carcasses.
2. Adequate assessments for on-site burial should initially consider County Soil Surveys for suitable areas by soil map unit confirmed by on site assessments from qualified individuals.
3. In the case where the burial site is in a waste disposal spray field, the burial site is not available for subsequent waste spraying until a new viable crop is established on the site.
4. The burial site shall be located so as to minimize the effect of storm water runoff.
5. Burial is not permitted in the tiled area of an under-drained field.

Buffers and Setbacks:

6. The site where poultry carcasses are to be buried should be 3 feet above the seasonal high water table (SHWT) whenever possible. SHWT is determined by direct observation of soil mottles or matrix with a color of chroma 2 or less, using the Munsell color chart. If a 3-foot separation is not possible, then the following minimal separations should be used:
 - a. Soil Group I – 36 inches
 - i. Soil Group I – Sandy Texture Soils: sand and loamy sand textural class.
 - b. Soil Group II – 24 inches
 - i. Soil Group II – Coarse-loamy and Fine-loamy Texture Soils: sandy loam, silt, silt loam, sandy clay loam, clay loam, and silty clay loam textural class.
 - c. Soil Group III – 18 inches
 - i. Soil Group III – Clayey Texture Soils: sandy clay, silty clay, and clay textural class.
(Based on Solid Waste Rules, Septage Management—15A NCAC 13B .0837)
7. Depth to rock: in soils without a SHWT but with a lithic (R horizon) or paralithic (Cr horizon) contact, the separation between the dead animals and lithic/paralithic contact should be 2 feet.
8. There must be at least 3 feet of soil covering any buried animal. This can be interpreted to mean soil mounded over the animals lying on the soil surface.
9. Setbacks:
 - a. 50 feet—property boundary, unless the owner of the adjacent property is the same person or entity.

- b. 300 feet—any existing stream or public body of water, and at no time within the regulated floodway of any waters of the State of NC.
 - c. 300 feet—any existing public water supply well.
 - d. 100 feet—any other type of existing well.
10. The burial site cannot include any portion of a waste lagoon or lagoon wall.

Record Keeping/Post Burial:

1. A record of the location of the approved site (GPS latitude and longitude coordinates if available), the burial history of each burial site to include the date, species, head count and age must be kept by the owner and reported to the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources the State Veterinarian and the Local Health Director. Post-disposal environmental assessment should be considered for on-site burial or mounding of more than 250,000 birds (to include a minimum of three monitoring wells with one well located up-gradient of groundwater flow). Surface water sampling may also be considered.

Collective Burial Site

2. A collective burial site may be designated to serve multiple farms in the event of a large-scale emergency whereby individual farm sites are not available. In addition to the siting criteria above, in order to establish a collective burial site, it should be constructed with, at a minimum, a 1.25×10^{-6} clay liner at least 18 inches in thickness. In addition, post disposal assessment as noted above would be recommended for any collective burial site. Due to the potential generation of gases from the decomposition of mortality, DENR recommends monitoring of enclosed buildings, spaces, etc. within 500 feet of the disposal area.