PINPOINT
Rivers Trusts and Farmers tackling water pollution

THE RIVERS TRUST

A clear solution for farmers
CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

A joint project between the Environment Agency and Natural England, funded by Defra and the Rural Development Programme for England, working in priority catchments within England.

Best Practice Information Sheet

Organic by-products

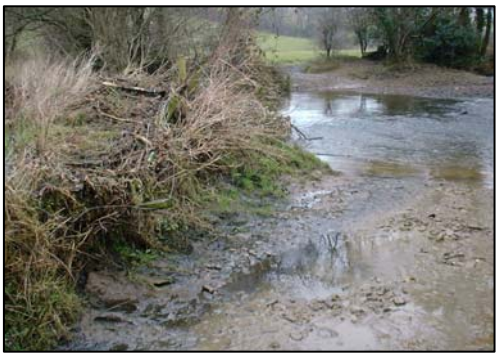
Sheet 10.0a

Water pollution risk reduction

Why change?

Water pollution -point source or diffuse- is a significant risk for farmers, carrying the possibility of prosecution, fines of up to £20,000, bad publicity and loss of reputation, time and money. Simple precautions and practical plans can be undertaken to minimise the risks. By managing them you can:

- reduce the possibility of prosecution, fines and damages
- avoid increased insurance premiums
- minimise the clean-up costs of any pollution that occurs.



Preventing water pollution can be simple and effective

Steps to success

1. **Review your current situation** by inspecting all stores, yards, tracks, land and watercourses for signs of runoff and potential accident risks such as chemical spillages or leaks which could cause pollution. Dirty water management is one of the most common sources of pollution. Also check the pathways of all sources of clean water which, if not adequately separated, may add to the problem especially during periods of heavy rainfall.

2. **Identify potential opportunities** such as:

   - **Pollution prevention** by:

   - minimising the risks of spillage or leaks from chemicals storage and mixing areas, pesticides, organic by-products, silage liquor, fuel oil caused by physical damage, e.g. delivery vehicles, inadequate storage, containment failure, valve or pump malfunction, and fire or flood
   - managing applications of organic by-products, fertilisers, chemicals and wastes to ensure they are accurate, timely and appropriate so the that risks of leaching, runoff and losses are reduced
   - managing soils to avoid transport of sediments, nutrients and chemicals via wheelings and tracks to watercourses by timely and appropriate cropping, cultivation and use of soil conservation practices such as managing vegetation to reduce erosion.

   - **Pollution management** by:

   - familiarising yourself with the signs of pollution
   - considering the potential pathways and impacts of pollutants
   - developing and maintaining “fail safe” systems, such as bunded storage, to contain leaks and provide time for remedial action
   - formulating simple and practical contingency plans, including emergency resources, equipment and materials required to minimise potential pollution accidents. e.g. absorbent for chemical spillages
   - keeping an updated and easily accessible list of appropriate emergency telephone numbers, including the EA (0800 80 70 60), and friendly neighbours to call in a crisis.

3. **Prioritise** your action plan to focus on the risk of major pollutions or incidents that could result in health risks, e.g. contamination of water used for public supplies, but do not ignore diffuse pollution impacts from ditches etc.

4. **Check that** all involved are aware of the risks, as well as the actions needed to forestall pollution. Make it a routine part of the farm work to check key areas and watercourses for any evidence of pollution impacts.

PINPOINT
Rivers Trusts and Farmers tackling water pollution

Best Practice
Information Sheet

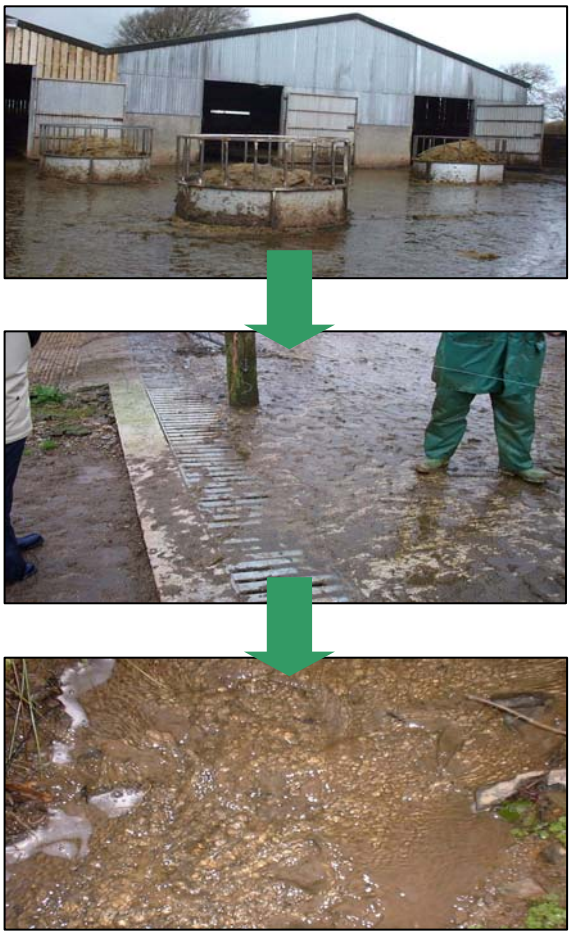
Organic by-products

Sheet 10.0b

Water pollution risk reduction – **Practical examples**

Reducing pollution risk is best practice because it reduces the risk of prosecution. Fines for water pollution in a Magistrates Court can be up to £20,000 plus costs. There is also the risk of much higher civil damages, remedial costs and higher insurance premiums. In addition there will potentially be loss of reputation and bad publicity along with the associated loss of time and money.

Pathway from yard to drain to river



Pathway from field to drain to river

Remember

- Reducing the risk of pollution is best practice and can save you the costs of prosecution and civil damages.
- Recognise the signs of pollution.
- Regularly inspect for pollution impact or potential risks and aim to rectify the dangers.
- Have an emergency plan of what to do if a pollution occurs and keep it up to date.

For further information: Defra (www.defra.gov.uk), CSF (www.gov.uk/catchment-sensitive-farming), Natural England (www.naturalengland.org.uk/csf), Environment Agency (www.environment-agency.gov.uk), Cross Compliance Helpline 0845 345 1302 (www.crosscompliance.org.uk) and The Rivers Trust (www.theriverstrust.org)

THE RIVERS TRUST

A clear solution for farmers
CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

This information sheet is part of a series providing farmers with advice on land management practices to protect water bodies, produced by The Rivers Trust with support from Catchment Sensitive Farming. The advice will also enable farmers to use farm resources more efficiently and help meet Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and Soil Protection Review requirements under Cross Compliance and environmental regulation.

Based on Information Sheets originally created by the Westcountry Rivers Trust (www.wrt.org.uk) and developed with EAGGF objective one funding and published under permission by DEFRA and RT