

Running a boarding kennel? Know Your Environmental Regulations

If you are operating a boarding kennel, you need to be aware of Ohio EPA regulations that apply to you. If you have wastewater discharges from your kennel or generate other wastes, Ohio EPA may regulate these activities. It is important to understand and comply with these regulations to help avoid violations.

This fact sheet highlights some of the major Ohio EPA requirements that could apply to your kennel. It may not cover every requirement, but will provide you with a starting point to identify where you might be subject to regulation. You may also need to contact agencies such as the local building department, fire department, health department, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and others to find out about additional requirements that apply to your business.

Managing Wastes

Under Ohio's regulations, any business that generates a waste must determine the proper classification of the waste and ensure proper disposal. Solid wastes and wastewater are commonly generated when cages and holding areas are cleaned. If you are grooming animals (for example, flea dips) or providing medical care, you may be dealing with infectious or hazardous wastes.

Solid and Infectious Waste

Solid, non-hazardous wastes generated from kennels include trash/garbage, plastic, aluminum, paper, cleaning rags and animal waste (fecal matter). Where possible, recycle solid wastes that are recyclable. All wastes that can't be recycled must be sent to a licensed solid waste landfill. Fecal matter from kennels is not suitable for composting.

If your boarding kennel is associated with a veterinary practice, you would be classified as an infectious waste generator for wastes such as disposable sharps; animal tissue, organs and body parts; animal blood and blood products; materials soiled with animal blood; live and attenuated vaccines; and cultures of infectious agents or zoonotic agents. Under Ohio's regulations, infectious waste generators need to meet requirements related to handling, packaging and disposal.

For more information, you can get a copy of Ohio EPA's Infectious Waste Guidance Document for Veterinarians through the Division of Materials and Waste Management (DMWM) at epa.ohio.gov/portals/34/document/guidance/gd_077.pdf.



Tips for Properly Managing Your Kennel Wastes

- Never dispose of any waste on your property.
- Make sure you evaluate all your waste streams to determine if they are hazardous wastes. If you have hazardous wastes, make sure you comply with the rules and are disposing of these at a permitted hazardous waste facility.
- Use separate containers for individual waste streams, particularly for recycled materials.
- Collect solids from kennel areas before washing floors, unless you are connected to a public wastewater treatment plant that can accept this waste or you have a properly designed on-site sewage treatment system for this waste. Devices such as fitted traps or filters should be used to help prevent solids (dog hair, fecal matter) from clogging the system. Fecal wastes are not suitable for any type of composting operation.
- Keep wastes stored in closed containers to prevent spills and leaks.
- Don't mix wastes, particularly chemical wastes. This may make disposal more difficult and expensive.
- Reduce or eliminate use of materials containing mercury. Use alternatives to dips, wound treatments or vaccines that contain mercury. Use mercury-free equipment. For example, replace mercury thermometers with digital thermometers.

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Hazardous Waste

Materials such as outdated or unwanted pharmaceutical wastes (for example, expired/unusable drugs and medications) may be classified as hazardous wastes under Ohio's rules. Some of the cleaning agents you use or wastes from diagnostic operations also may be hazardous wastes.

Under the rules, hazardous waste must be sent for disposal at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility and CANNOT be disposed of in the trash. If you need additional information about how to evaluate your wastes, see Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization at (614) 644-2924.

If you are generating a hazardous waste, you must also comply with the appropriate generator requirements. The rules that apply to you depend on how much hazardous waste you generate per calendar month. For more information, a good starting point is Ohio EPA's Hazardous Waste Generator Handbook available at epa.ohio.gov/portals/32/pdf/gen_handbook.pdf.

Handling Wastewater

It is common for boarding kennels to generate wastewater from clean up. Where do the sinks and drains at your kennel discharge? If you plan to discharge to your local wastewater treatment plant (called a publicly owned treatment works, or POTW), it is important that you contact them to ensure they'll accept your wastewater and to see what local requirements they may have for your discharge. If you have a small operation and a discharge that is not heavily contaminated, you most likely will not be required to get a permit, but it's important to check on this directly.

If your local POTW does not have an approved pretreatment program, Ohio EPA's Division of Surface Water (DSW) is responsible for regulating those who discharge and issuing permits. If you are unsure where your local POTW is located or who to contact, call your local Ohio EPA district office, Division of Surface Water for help. DSW staff can also tell you whether your local POTW has an approved pretreatment program.

It is important to know that Ohio EPA's regulations generally DO NOT allow for the discharge of chemicals into an on-site sewage treatment system, like a septic tank/leach field or mound system. Discharging chemicals into an on-site septic system can kill the helpful bacteria that break down sewage wastes. In addition, chemicals can leach from the system into nearby ground water. It's also important that the system is properly designed to handle the volume of solid waste and wastewater generated.

If you want to operate a boarding kennel from your home or are planning to purchase a property with an existing septic system, contact Ohio EPA's DSW to review your options for handling your wastes and wastewater. In addition, if you want to build a boarding kennel that is in an area that does not have city sewers, contact Ohio EPA before you select a site for your business.

You must get a permit-to-install (PTI) from Ohio EPA before you construct or modify an on-site wastewater treatment/disposal system. If you are required to install a holding tank because there is no access to a POTW or inability to use an existing on-site system, a PTI for installing a tank is also required. The PTI outlines technical and design requirements for the system as well as operating conditions that must be met. You can contact your local Ohio EPA district office, DSW staff for more information on the wastewater discharge and permitting requirements. You can also visit DSW's Permit-to-Install Program website at epa.ohio.gov/dsw/pti/index.aspx.

In addition to permitting requirements under DSW, discharges to a septic system, dry well or leaching lines also require the submittal of a Class V inventory form to Ohio EPA's Division of Drinking and Ground Waters (DDAGW). For more information on Ohio EPA's Class V injection well requirements, visit epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/uic.aspx.

Tips to Properly Manage Wastewater

- Make sure you know where all your sinks and drains discharge. If you are discharging to a POTW, it may be easy to get permission or a permit for your discharge.
- Know that discharging wastewaters that contain medical wastes, pest control chemicals, disinfectants or other chemicals to a septic system is prohibited. Your system also may not be adequate to handle the volume of solids or wastewater you'll be generating. To ensure you'll have adequate options for disposing of your wastes/wastewater, consult with Ohio EPA before you select a site for your business.

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Drinking Water

Some boarding kennels are in areas where there is no access to city drinking water. If there is a well on your property, it may meet Ohio EPA's definition of a public water system. A public water system is one that has at least 15 service connections or regularly provides water to 25 or more people for 60 or more days a year. Under these regulations, you must submit plans for installing or changing a well. In addition, well systems must be tested periodically and the test results reported to Ohio EPA. Contact your local Ohio EPA district office, DDAGW for more information on public water system requirements.

More Information

If you have questions about Ohio EPA's regulations, please contact Ohio EPA's Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) for FREE technical assistance at (800) 329-7518. You can also contact your local Ohio EPA district office that oversees the county in which your business is located. See the map below for district office contact information.

Pollution Prevention Opportunities

- Use the least amount of disinfectants needed to do the job. Low volume liquid sprays are the most suitable.
- Use biodegradable and low phosphate dog-wash products versus more harmful and persistent pesticides such as organophosphorus compounds (for example, malathion or chlorpyrifos).
- Set up a waste recycling system for nonhazardous solid wastes such as plastics, metal and paper. Use separate containers for individual waste streams.
- To help reduce the possibility of generating a hazardous waste, don't purchase chemicals in large quantities and use up all the products that you do purchase.

Central Office

Lazarus Government Center
50 W. Town St., Suite 700
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 644-3020

Central District Office

Lazarus Government Center
50 W. Town St., Suite 700
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 728-3778
(800) 686-2330

Northwest District Office

347 N. Dunbridge Rd.
Bowling Green, OH 43402
(419) 352-8461
(800) 686-6930

Northeast District Office

2110 E. Aurora Rd.
Twinsburg, OH 44087
(330) 963-1200
(800) 686-6330

Southeast District Office

2195 E. Front Street
Logan, OH 43138
(740) 385-8501
(800) 686-7330

Southwest District Office

401 E. Fifth St.
Dayton, OH 45402
(937) 285-6357
(800) 686-8930



*Toll-free numbers are for citizens with questions or concerns about environmental issues.
The regulated community should use the business line for routine business.
Spills and emergencies should be reported to (800) 282-9378.*