

## **DWAF POLICY ON THE REGISTRATION OF SMALL PRIVATE NON-COMMERCIAL FARM WASTE DISPOSAL SITES**

The DWAF regional offices have been tasked to register all waste disposal sites within their regions as required in the National Waste Management Strategy and in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) (NWA), where all water users must be registered. The DWAF DW 808 (replaces the DW 768) registration form must be completed and electronically captured on the WARMS system by the DWAF official. This would enable the regional offices to determine the following:

- Where and how many disposal sites exist in their region.
- What type of waste is being disposed of.
- The volume of waste that was and will be disposed of on specific sites.
- Whether sites are still operational and if not, whether disused sites have been sufficiently rehabilitated.
- What possible impacts or risks the sites pose to human health and well being and the environment.
- Whether sites are permitted, and if, whether the sites comply with permit conditions.
- Whether the regional offices can control the sites by means of Directions in terms of section 20(5) of the Environment Conservation Act, 1989 (Act 73 of 1989) (ECA) or whether a permit in terms of section 20 (1) of ECA / a licence in terms of section 21(g) of NWA application must be requested.
- Prioritise the sites according to the pollution risk potential.
- Keep a register of the sites.

The risk of pollution posed by small non-commercial farm disposal sites to the quality of the water resource, especially the quality of drinking water, is regarded as negligible, for the following reasons:

- Usually these sites are small pits in which only the general household waste that is produced by the permanent residents of the farm is disposed of and often burned. These small volumes and the nature of the waste would normally not pose a risk to the environment.
- The risk of pollution posed by small non-commercial farm disposal sites is an issue that is of low priority when compared with the pollution caused by activities resulting from other sources. Examples of this include the improper siting and inadequate operation of commercial farm waste disposal sites (fruit husks or animal products), feedlots and the use and storage of pesticides.

Waste disposal sites located on privately owned farms receiving no more than one ton of general household waste (not agricultural or industrial waste, such as fruit rests or animal products) per day (small non-commercial farm disposal sites), may therefore be exempt from registration on condition that:

- The site is situated outside a water resource and above the 1:50 year floodline;
- The site is adequately fenced to prevent entry of people and animals;
- The site does not overlay an area with shallow or emergent water tables;
- The burning of waste does not cause any nuisance conditions to neighbours; and
- The waste does not cause any nuisance conditions due to the breeding of flies or other vermin.

However, should the Regional Officer become aware (e.g. through complaints from neighbours or other parties) of instances where small non-commercial farm disposal sites could cause nuisance conditions or pose a risk to the quality of drinking water, due to the conditions below, the registration of that site may be requested, after having visited the site.

- Burning of waste (such as tyres) causes persistent and unacceptable air pollution or nuisance conditions.
- Burning waste that is left unattended, poses a fire hazard.
- The small non-commercial farm disposal site is located such that floodwaters may wash the waste into a water source.
- Livestock and animals have access to the site.
- The site attracts or breeds flies or vermin.
- The site could cause the contamination of a shallow ground water resource or a surface water resource.

In such cases the Regional Officer should determine the extent of the problem (site visit) and discuss possible solutions with the offending farmer before requesting the farmer to register his/her small non-commercial farm disposal site.

A copy hereof could also be provided to farmers, to guide them in the management of their own small non-commercial farm disposal site.