

PART 521 - POLLUTION ABATEMENT AND WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

521.00 General.

(a) Soil and water conservation practices should be planned and implemented to adequately reduce delivery of pollutants to surface and ground water in order to meet intended goals. SCS is authorized to provide assistance to reduce agriculture-related pollution and to improve water quality. It is the intent of SCS to integrate water quality considerations into all SCS activities and programs (see National Instruction No. 460-301, Dec. 1982). The primary pollutants to be considered, but not limited to, are sediment, nutrients, pesticides, suspended and dissolved solids, oxygen-demanding organic materials, toxic substance, and bacteria. Where appropriate, factors that contribute to marked changes in water temperature should also be considered.

(b) Pollution abatement and water-quality maintenance and improvement are to be considered in the planning, design, and construction phases of conservation operations and project activities.

521.01 Pollution abatement in conservation operations.

(a) Planning. Pollution abatement and proper management of wastes are to be considered in planning resource management systems and practices in agricultural areas. Individual practices are to be a part of an overall waste management plan for the enterprise.

(b) Design. Waste management and pollution abatement systems are to be designed in conformance with the National Handbook of Conservation Practices and applicable Federal, State, and local requirements.

(c) Installation. System components and practices are to be installed in a sequence that insures that each will function as intended without being hazardous to others or to the overall system.

(d) Operation and maintenance. The owner or operation is responsible for operating and maintaining systems and their component practices. A written plan for operation and maintenance is to be prepared and agreed to by owner and operator.

521.02 Pollution abatement in project activities.

Pollution abatement at structure sites and throughout the watershed is to be considered in planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of all project activities. The effect a project will have on pollution of impounded or downstream surface water and groundwater is to be evaluated. Appropriate provisions will be included to minimize pollution. Project water quality conditions must also be evaluated to assure that the existing quality is suitable for the intended project uses.

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521.03 Effect of SCS activities on water quality.

(a) Conservation operations. The effect of recommended conservation practices and land use on the quality of surface and ground water is to be evaluated. Current and potential use of water as well as public health and established water quality standards are to be considered.

(b) Project activities. Water-quality investigations, analyses, and interpretations in project activities are to be carried out to establish baseline conditions and determine the effects of projects on the quality of surface and ground water (see Technical Release No. 58).

521.04 Effect of water quality on SCS activities.

The effect of the quality of impounded or managed water is to be considered in SCS-assisted practices and projects. Impoundments, in particular, are sensitive to nutrients and pesticides in the water delivered to them. Saline or strongly acid water can have an adverse effect on many practices. Water for recreation and many other uses must meet established criteria relative to pathogens, suspended and dissolved solids, taste and odor, etc. (See Technical Release No. 58).