



Overview of Environmental/Health Programs in Newfoundland and Labrador

(Agriculture Related)

Department of Natural Resources

**Agrifoods Development Branch
Land Resource Stewardship Division**

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Introduction

The purpose of this overview is to describe the role various provincial and federal government departments and agencies have with regards to environmental and health programming in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is not a complete description of the responsibilities of these groups. Additional information is available at www.gov.nl.ca.

If you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact the telephone numbers at the back of the brochure. If the Land Management Specialist is not able to answer your questions, they will determine who is in the best position to do so.

(1) Enforcement/Permitting Agencies

Municipalities

- Municipalities require permits for all types of development within their jurisdiction.
- The Municipal Plan guides development.
- Land use tables state what is permitted in a particular zone.
- Development regulations require set backs from property boundaries, roads, flood plains, adherence to building codes, etc.
- Municipalities have the authority to prepare nuisance regulations.
- Public input is encouraged in the development of town plans.

Government Service Centre

- One-stop shopping concept.

Health

- Food licenses, eg. dairy parlours; inspections of slaughtering facilities (food related).
- Permits for unserviced water and septic systems.
- Legislation regarding manure spreading near wells.
- Inspections for food premises, eg. milk parlours are conducted twice a year.
- With the exception of food premises, inspections are normally done on a complaint basis only.

Environment

- Responsible for environmental permitting and investigation on behalf of the Department of Environment and Conservation.
- Responsible for the preparation of Environmental Certificate of Approval for Poultry and Livestock Operations. Application forms are available.
- Main elements of the Certificate of Approval:
 - manure containment/handling
 - manure spreading
 - land base
 - fuel tanks
- Government Service Center Environmental Protection Officers are required to complete one inspection per year of livestock and poultry operations.

Fire, Life, Safety

- When applying to the Government Services Centre for environmental or health permitting, an application for fire, life or safety may be required. Developments requiring sprinklers, fire alarms or buildings with large number of staff and/or public may require a review of safety protocols.

Department of Environment and Conservation

Environmental Assessment Division

- Major projects must be registered. If registered, the applicant must provide 40 copies of an overview of the project. The copies are forwarded to all levels of Government.

- Ministerial discretion may be used to require new or expanded farm applications to register, eg. currently the Minister is registering “all” mink farms.
- The Department has interpreted pelting operations as abattoirs, which require registration. When fur farms are registered, the pelting component would be addressed at the same time.
- Tanning operations must be registered.
- Clearing of greater than 50 hectares of land must be registered.
- Most agricultural projects are released; however, the farmer will be informed of required permits, such as the Environmental Certificate of Approval prepared by the Government Services Centre.
- If registered, the information is published on the Departments website, public comments are encouraged.
- Inspections are not normally conducted on farm proposals.

Pollution Prevention Division

- Pesticide Training and Enforcement.

Water Resources Division

- Permitting required for culverts, bridges, alteration of a water body (including peatland developments), and development in or near water supplies.
- A non-domestic well, drilled well and water use requires permits under the Water Resources Act.
- Inspections are not normally conducted in respect to the referenced permitting.

Environment Canada

- Fisheries Act.
- Will respond to reports of effluent which might be harmful to fish, eg. manure entering brooks.
- The Department does not normally conduct routine inspections.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

- The Department will investigate activities in water bodies which negatively impact fish habitat, such as erosion/sedimentation.
- The Department does not normally conduct routine inspections.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

- Under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the following must be considered:
 - Projects which involve Federal funding,
 - Projects on Federal land; and/or,
 - When Federal regulations apply.
- Projects which fall within the Act are published on the Agencies website for 15 days.
- Generally, a field inspection is not required.
- Screening measures are being implemented to facilitate a review.
- Only physical projects, not activities, are considered under the Act.

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- Agrifoods Branch is responsible for the release of the Environmental Certificate of Approval as prepared by the Government Services Centre.
- Application forms and information packages regarding the Certificates are available from Regional Agricultural Offices.

Recommendations:

- Apply early.
- Complete the application in full.
- Submit application for CoA before or at the same time as funding and other permitting applications to avoid delays.

(2) Education/Awareness

Agrifoods Branch, Department of Natural Resources

Land Resource Stewardship Division

Environmental Farm Planning (EFP):

- This program provides for a confidential environmental overview of farms. The information is not released unless authorized by the farmer and is voluntary, however some funding programs may require a completed EFP in order to be eligible.
- Step 1, the Environmental Scan, is a quick overview of the farm. Step 2, The Environmental Farm Plan, is a more detailed review which results in an action plan to address priority environmental issues. The Scan and Plan are completed with the assistance of the Agrifoods Branch.
- The Program has no relationship with other Government Departments or Agencies; however, the information can be used by the farmer to address any concerns of such agencies or to assist in the acquisition of environmental permits, notably an Environmental Certificate of Approval.

Department of Environment and Conservation

Pollution Prevention Division

- Pesticide Applicators Training (delivered in conjunction with the Agrifoods Branch).

(3) Resolving Farm Practices Complaints

Farm Practices Protection Act

- This Act protects farms operating according to acceptable farm practices.
- A person who is aggrieved by odours, noise, dust etc. resulting from a farm may ask the Farm Industry Review Board to determine whether the disturbances results from an acceptable farm practice.
- The Agrifoods Branch has prepared Farm Practice Guidelines for Poultry, Livestock and the Horticultural industries which may assist the Farm Industry Review Board to determine if a farm activity is considered an acceptable farm practice.
- The Minister may request that the Farm Practices Review Board report on a matter related to farm practices. The Minister may also issue policy directives for acceptable farm practices.

The following are available from the Agrifoods Branch:

- Environmental Farm Practice Guidelines for Agricultural Operations (Horticultural, Livestock and Poultry).
- Development Permits for the Construction/Expansion of Livestock and Poultry Facilities.
- The Environmental Farm Plan Workbook.
- Application Form for an Environmental Certificate of Approval for Livestock Poultry Farm.
- Guidelines for Clearing Land for Cultivation and Pasture.

For further information, please contact:

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