

New drains and curb stone aprons in farm yards

Installing new drains and curb stone aprons in a farm yard will prevent runoff leaving the yard and entering a nearby watercourse. It will also help to improve clean and dirty water separation by preventing runoff from clean yards from entering dirty yards.

Installing new drains will collect and direct runoff into an appropriate receptor (i.e., clean water into a rainwater harvesting tank, ditch or soakaway, and dirty water into a dirty water/slurry store).

Length of agreement available

- 10 years from the date of completion of the work. This is the minimum length of time that the drains and curb stone aprons should be kept and maintained in good working order to prevent runoff from farm yards entering a nearby watercourse and keeping clean water away from dirty water

Where to use this measure

- In yards where there is a risk of runoff leaving a yard and entering a nearby watercourse
- In yards where there are no yard drains or curb stone aprons to prevent clean water from mixing with dirty water, or where the drains are badly damaged and are not functioning effectively
- To contain, collect and direct yard runoff into a suitable compliant containment

Where this measure cannot be used

- To direct clean water into the dirty water system, or dirty water into the clean water system

Requirements

- Final construction designs and product specifications must be approved by a member of the project team
- Install new yard drains or curb stone aprons according to final approved construction designs and product specifications, in order to contain, collect and direct yard runoff into a suitable compliant containment
- Remove all damaged yard drains before putting in the new yard drains
- Maintain the drains and curb stone aprons in good working order for at least 10 years from the date of completion of the work
- Yard drains that are used to collect dirty water must be directed to the farm's compliant dirty water/slurry store

- Yard drains that are used to collect clean water must be directed to rainwater harvesting tank, ditch or soakaway and not into the farm's dirty water/slurry store

Consents and permits

- Seek listed building consent if appropriate
- Planning permission or Prior Notification (Agricultural Exemption) may be needed for curb stone aprons

Record keeping and payment terms

Agreement holders will need to keep the following records and supply them with the payment claim. Payment will only be made upon satisfactory receipt of all of the following records:

- Photographs of before and after completion of the work
- Copies of any consents or permissions connected with the work
- Copies of any quotes connected with the work
- Farm and field information needed to run a phosphorus loss tool for the farm and calculate the reduction in phosphorus loss to water arising from this work. This will include farm data relating to livestock numbers, cropping areas and fertiliser / manure inputs.
- Self-declaration that the terms of the project agreement have been adhered to (key terms are listed above).
- Successful applicants are required to sign a declaration confirming that:

o reasonable precautions are taken to prevent nutrients and soil from the relevant field entering watercourses or from being leached to groundwater - to an extent that could cause pollution.

o the relevant fields have not been (i) the source of a recorded pollution incident which could have been prevented by the farmer taking reasonable precautions to prevent that pollution and/or (ii) the subject of a warning, fine, prosecution or BPS deduction issued to the farmer by the Environment Agency or RPA for a breach of NVZ rules or Farming Rules for Water in the past 5 years.

- It is expected that to support and inform the above declaration, successful applicants will complete the Environment Agency's Agricultural Compliance Tool (ACT) by 31st December in each year of the agreement and submit it when completed to Wessex Water (who will hold it in confidence) and address any actions identified by the ACT. For agreements involving annual payments of more than 5 years duration and/or with a value in excess of £5,000 of annual payments, this is a requirement.

- Agreement holders are required to complete a Wessex Water supplier application form in order to receive their first payment. A copy of this is available on the scheme website.

Additional information

New yard drains and curb sone aprons can help to improve clean and dirty water separation in farm yards and reduce the volume of clean water entering the farm's slurry store. This can improve the farm's effective storage capacity of slurry in the store. The regulations governing the storage of slurry are contained in the [SSAFO](#) (Storing of silage, slurry and agricultural fuel oil) regulations and the [Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations](#) 2015.

Check the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) [website](#) for more information on effective use of water on dairy farms.

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) operates in parts of the country where there are water quality issues linked to farming. The scheme provides farmers with free advice and training. See guidance for further information on [CSF](#).



Installation of a rainwater drain to channel rainwater away from cattle yards. *Photo credit: Tom Hicks*