

Do not discharge any waste directly to waters of the state

Direct discharge of waste to waterways is prohibited. The waste can impair water quality, threaten human health, and harm or kill fish and other aquatic species. Also, do not discharge wastewater to ground where runoff can occur or when it cannot adequately infiltrate and be taken up by plants.

Separate solids, whey, and 1st rinse from other wastewater

Solids, whey, and 1st rinse water are “high-strength” (contain the most organic matter), and put the most strain on a wastewater system, whether your own or a municipal wastewater treatment plant. High-strength waste can cause septic failure, and it can be expensive to send to a treatment plant.

Put high-strength waste to better use, such as feeding animals or creating energy through anaerobic digestion. It may also be land-applied to farm fields (only during times when the nutrients can be taken up by growing plants), or sent to a manure pit for later land-application. Low-strength wastes can be discharged to an on-site wastewater system or municipal wastewater treatment plant.

Drain tips

Good drain design and practice can go a long way to saving you headaches, time, and money. Basics include:

- follow plumbing code
- use traps to catch solids and fats on sink drains connected directly to wastewater discharge lines
- air vent drains
- drains centered over a floor sink should terminate two diameters above the sink’s flood rim (this makes an air gap)
- don’t let butterfat or sludge from separators go down the drain

Make sure your holding and equalization tanks have adequate capacity to store the volume of wastewater you plan to be generating.

And don’t just plan for what you need now, when everything goes right. Have enough capacity to handle delays or complications in wastewater management. If you hope to grow your operation, consider what additional capacity you may need.