

Chesapeake Bay Reboot

Because Pennsylvania will not meet its 2017 pollution reduction goals for restoring the Chesapeake Bay, DEP has developed a new strategy called the "Bay Reboot". This new plan sets an annual goal of inspecting 10% of the farms in each county that is within the bay watershed. As part of this reboot strategy, DEP is strongly urging conservation districts that receive funding from the Chesapeake Bay Program to do compliance visits. In Snyder County, this would mean approximately 50 farm inspections per year.

Because every farm in the state is required to have both a manure management plan (if the farm has animals or spreads manure) and an Ag erosion control plan, EPA is pressuring DEP to be more accountable by making these inspections. And, since DEP is understaffed, conservation districts are now being pressured by DEP to take on their role as compliance officers. These farm inspections will determine if there are any deficiencies in the plans, and will result in taking appropriate actions if the plans are not current or not being followed. If districts refuse to take on this new role that harbors on enforcement, their Chesapeake Bay Program funding will be withdrawn.

At the Snyder County Conservation District we have always prided ourselves in our role of serving the county by providing assistance to farmers and landowners with implementing manure management plans, nutrient management plans, best management practices and water quality projects. In this new role, districts will be strongly urged to switch from wearing the traditional white hat of providing technical, financial and administrative assistance to the new black hat of compliance and enforcement.

We would like to encourage all farmers, whether small, large, part-time or full time, to get into compliance by having the needed plans for your farm whether a manure management, nutrient management, or conservation plan. Contact our office if you need assistance with any compliance issues.

Staff and Directors of the Snyder County Conservation District

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Note: This message was sent to the Snyder County Farm Bureau, as per request, to be placed in their newsletter to their members.