Emergency Ventilation for Hog Barns

Mike Brumm, Brumm Swine Consultancy

Manure application season will arrive soon—and it’s never too early to consider ventilation maintenance and procedures that can improve worker and animal safety. This PorkCast will address ventilation management during manure pit agitation and pump-out.

Emergency Ventilation for Hog Barns will address:
- Causes and prevention of ventilation failure
- Recommended ventilation procedures during manure agitation and pumping
- Causes of pig death during ventilation failure
- Safety measures during manure agitation and pumping
- Emergency procedures and action plans
Pig Deaths During Pumping

- Only 22% of barns with deaths had curtains open
- Only 43% of barns with deaths had pit fans on
- 94% of deaths at medium to high agitation
- 67% of deaths on relatively calm days
- 29% of deaths on days with >20 mph wind

UMN survey
Pit Pumping Protocols

- NEVER allow people in a building being pumped
  - Lockout Tags
  - Yellow warning tape?
  - Physical barrier?
Lockout Tag Contacts:

Minnesota Pork Board
Iowa Pork Producers Assn
Illinois Pork Producers Assn

MANURE AGITATION AND PUMP-OUT IN PROGRESS

Start Date/Time: __________________________
End Date/Time: __________________________
Questions, please contact: ____________
______________________________

To request tags, contact the
Minnesota Pork Board at 507-345-8814.
Pit Pumping Protocols

- Someone on site at all times
- Emergency Address of site

57903 841 Rd, Hogtown, MN

vs

Jones Tunnel Site 2 miles west of Hogtown
Pit Pumping Protocols

- Someone on site at all times
- Emergency plan

Emergency Action Plans for Minnesota Pork Producers

A pork producer’s Emergency Action Plan provides detailed information on what to do if there is an accident or emergency at your livestock facility, such as a manure spill. While an emergency action plan is not a state or federal requirement, it is a good idea because a well-designed and implemented emergency action plan can:

- Reduce the severity of the emergencies
- Reduce risk to humans and animals
- Reduce economic loss
- Reduce potential environmental pollution

Keep a copy of the plan with your manure management plan, production record, or somewhere else that is easily remembered and accessible to you, employees and family members.

ACTION PLAN PIECES

An emergency action plan has four elements: 1) plan of action to prevent the release of manure, or prevent environmental contamination; 2) detailed map of the site and application fields; 3) list of contact names and numbers that is posted near the phone; 4) and a clean-up plan.
Pit Pumping Protocols

- Someone on site at all times
  - Emergency contact information
    - MPCA/DNR/DEQ
    - Dirt work
    - Sheriff
    - Rescue
Pit Pumping Protocols

- All fans in facility work!
Pit Pumping Protocols

- Agitation
  - Avoid “rooster-tailing” & splashing
  - Uncover only one port at a time
  - Cover port with a tarp
Pit Pumping Protocols

- **Agitation**
  - Consider **NO AGITATION** until 1-1.5 ft of removal
Hydrogen Sulfide Spikes

Patni & Clarke, 1991
Pit Pumping Protocols

Curtain Barn Ventilation

- Cold Weather
  - Big Pigs – close curtain
    - all fans ON
  - Little Pigs – 50% of fan capacity minimum
  - Reduce static pressure to reduce pit pulling
    - of air – 400 vs 800 fpm inlet velocity
Stirring Fans
Stirring Fans

Fans Used for Supplemental Cooling

Fans Used for Distributing Air

Dr Rick Stowell, Extension Ag Engineer, University of Nebraska
Pit Pumping Protocols

- Ventilation – Curtain Barns
Pit Pumping Protocols

Curtain Barn Ventilation

Warm Weather

> 5 mph breeze

- Open curtains + all fans ON

< 5 mph breeze

- Winter ventilation strategy
Pit Pumping Protocols

**Tunnel Barn Ventilation**

- **Cold Weather**
  - All pit fans + 36” at minimum
  - Partially open tunnel curtain
    - 400 fpm velocity at curtain/inlets
    - Reduced static pressure
Figure 3. Air Intake Velocity and Static Pressure Relationship

- Pressure, Inches, H₂O
- Velocity, Feet per Minute (fpm)

- 800 fpm
- 1000 fpm

Best range of operation
Figure 3. Air Intake Velocity and Static Pressure Relationship

- Pressure, Inches, H₂O

- Velocity, Feet per Minute (fpm)

800 fpm to 1000 fpm

Best range of operation

0 to .16
Reduce velocity to 400 fpm
Pit Pumping Protocols

Tunnel Barn Ventilation

- > 100 lb and > 45 F
- 2 tunnel fans @ minimum
- Open tunnel curtain to 400 fpm velocity
Pit Pumping Guidelines

**Developed by**
*Mike Brumm, Brumm Swine Consultancy, Inc. and Jay Harmon, Iowa State University*

Hydrogen sulfide can spike quickly and without warning during pit pumping. Aggressive agitation can contribute to the risk of gas spikes when agitation first begins and when the pit becomes nearly empty.

The following guidelines are suggested to improve safety and ventilation performance during manure pit agitation and pumping:

- **People should NEVER enter a building being pumped.**
  - Consider the addition of a physical barrier to entry doors—such as yellow caution tape, large warning placards, and/or lockout tags on doors during pumping.

- **A person should be at the site during pumping. This person should have a copy of the emergency action plan and emergency contact information for the site.**

- **Agitation Strategy**
  - Consider minimal or no agitation until the manure level is at least 1-foot to 1 ½-feet
Pit Pumping Protocols

- When the Pumpers Leave
  - Secure all pit covers after
  - Higher rate for 1-2 hours after
Secure Pit Covers – inlet for fans

1200 hd wean-finish
Double stocked
7.5 ft² inlet at start
Disaster Strikes!

Dr Jay Harmon, Iowa State U
Include long distance or cell phone number – proof of call may be an issue in some claims
Emergency Ventilation

At least 2x/yr pull ‘main’ and verify curtain drops work

Date and sign log form
Emergency Ventilation

Monthly (?) Test and Written History of Test
Verify Transfer Switch Works
What would insurance pay at this site?
Emergency Thermostats

Heater -5 Furnace minimum
Cooling 90’s
Emergency Thermostats

Location relative to tunnel curtain?
Insurance Policies

- Verify exclusions in policy
  - ‘suffocation’
    - What does this mean?
Heat Production in Growing Pigs

Trans ASAE 47(1):259-270

Heat Production in Growing Pigs
Types of Heat

- **Sensible Heat** – dry bulb temperature
  - Measured with thermometer

- **Latent Heat** (evaporation)
  - Heat involved in holding water vapor in air
  - ~1050 BTU/lb water
Cascade of Events

- At failure, air temperature rapidly rises
- As air temperature rises, pigs ability to lose heat to air decreases - heat loss becomes latent heat
At failure, air temperature rapidly rises

As air temperature rises, pigs ability to lose heat to air decreases - heat loss becomes latent heat

Latent heat increases humidity in air

Within 1 hour, 100% RH
- No heat loss possible by latent heat
- No heat loss to air at > 90 F air temp

Death is by organ failure due to heat!
Cascade of Events

- With big pigs, less than 30 minutes response time
- 30-70 lb pigs – up to 1 hr response time
15 lb pigs
- CO$_2$ within 150 minutes

50 lb pigs
- 60 minutes for temperature
- CO$_2$ within 95 minutes
Ventilation Failure

34 F outside with NW wind
200+ lb liveweight
3 cfm/pig minimum

+ 5 F increase in 5 minutes