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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Permits Issued to Bustorf and Waldron Dairies**

The Department of Environmental Quality announced today that it has issued water discharge permits to the Bustorf Dairy in Leonidas Township, St. Joseph County, and the Waldron Dairy in Wright Township, Hillsdale County. The DEQ's decision follows a review of public comments and supporting information to determine whether the permits met the standards contained within federal and state water quality regulations.

Waldron Dairy plans to expand their existing facility from 630 dairy cows to 2,230 dairy cows and 600 heifers, while Bustorf Dairy is a new facility that will house 2,260 dairy cows. Both of these operations are considered large CAFOs and are required to have these National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits in Michigan to conduct their operations.

The public participation process included public comment periods and public hearings in the communities, which generated significant input from the public. In response to the comments, both NPDES permits were revised to add increased levels of assurance that farm operations will not jeopardize the area's surface water quality. These revisions include:

- An increased waste storage design requirement that includes requiring a demonstration, the DEQ's approval, and verification of the waste storage design. Failure to verify adequate storage will result in herd size reduction.
- An increased operational requirement for the storage structure to include a provision addressing the failure to maintain an adequate margin of safety in the storage structure levels, which will result in herd size reduction.
- An additional requirement that outside waste may not be brought into the Waldron facility.

- An increased oversight of land application fields. This includes a requirement to prohibit the use of land application fields where illegal discharges occur.

The decision on the Bustorf Dairy application follows a denial of a previous NPDES permit application that was based on rebuttals provided by Leonidas Township, local residents, and other organizations to the statements contained in the Antidegradation Demonstration, which failed to show how the potential lowering of water quality was necessary to support important social and economic development in the area. The new application included a strengthened Antidegradation Demonstration with extensive supporting documentation.

Michigan has a total of 216 known CAFOs. Today's actions reduce the number of unpermitted CAFOs in the state to 19, all of which have now submitted NPDES permit applications with their applications currently being processed.

The permits issued today and related documents are available via the Internet by clicking on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation at [www.michigan.gov/deqnpdes](http://www.michigan.gov/deqnpdes).

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**Editor's note: DEQ news releases are available on the department's Internet home page at [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq).**

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