

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Agricultural Anaerobic Digester Operator Training Program

Operators of anaerobic digesters (AD) utilizing agricultural by-products may become certified by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) as qualified to operate an anaerobic digester system.

Certification is valid for three years, provided all requirements are maintained. Distinct certification identification will be issued by MDARD for each facility the operator manages. To meet the requirements of an MDARD certified AD operator, the person in responsible charge for operating and maintaining the AD system must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Attend an MDARD approved anaerobic digester operator training certification course every three years. This course is only required once every three years regardless of how many individual systems the operator manages.
2. Allow MDARD to make an annual on-site evaluation of the operation and maintenance of each system, the energy generating equipment, and record keeping.
3. Maintain records to verify land application is done in accordance with the appropriate Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs).
4. Develop and maintain an Operations and Maintenance Manual for the system.

Upon completion of the certification training course and on-site evaluation, the operator will be issued a certification number that will be unique to each facility location. The operator and owner of the digester must sign an agreement with MDARD indicating they will operate the digester in accordance with the above mentioned criteria. Failure to operate the digester in accordance with the criteria will result in removal of the operator from MDARD's certified operator list for that facility.

For more information on being a certified operator, please contact Laura Doud P.E., with MDARD, at 517-284-5625 or doudl@michigan.gov.