

Provincial Permit Process and Construction Requirements for Abattoirs



This document provides general information to anyone proposing to build or renovate a provincial abattoir.

All provincial abattoirs require a permit to operate and comply with the [Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation](#) and all other applicable regulations. Meat processed in a provincially-permitted abattoir can be sold only in Manitoba; not outside of the province.

If you are a potential operator, we encourage you to contact us at the initial stages of your project to review your plan. Working with your health officer (meat inspector) at initial stages can save you time and financial resources. We are also able to conduct an on-site building assessment to determine what is required to meet regulations. These services are free of charge.

Contact Manitoba Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Branch at foodsafety@gov.mb.ca to get started.

Planning and Location of Abattoirs and Meat Plants

Site and Location

Prior to site selection, plan development, and plant construction, it is essential that you identify all legislative or regulatory requirements of municipal corporations, provincial and federal governments. In many instances, the initial action will be assuring that land use and zoning requirements, as well as building codes are recognized. It is important that land use conflicts are addressed at the outset.

Ensure the abattoir location is free from conditions that might interfere with its sanitary operation (e.g., set reasonably apart from barnyards, stables, dead meat operations - other than approved rendering operations, and waste disposal grounds).

How to Obtain a Permit to Operate

- Submit an [online permit registration form](#) or fill in a [downloadable registration form](#) (PDF).
- You will be contacted by our staff, who will work with you to obtain your permit.
- A permit to operate an abattoir has no cost.
- A basic floor plan and a process description is required with the permit registration form.

Floor Plan

Submit a floor plan with the following details:

- Location of all buildings on the premises, access roadways, fences, and ancillary structures.
- The separation distances from other industrial, commercial, municipal and residential structures.
- Floor plan of each level, the purpose for which each room or area is to be used, location of walls, partitions, windows, doors, posts, conveyor rails and all equipment.
- Room and rail heights to be provided on or with the plans.
- Location and size of floor drains, curbing, gutters, slope of floors and hot and cold water outlets.
- Scale used for plan development and cardinal points of the compass.
- Sewage disposal system (e.g., municipal or private).
- Ventilation system proposed for the abattoir.
- Source of water to be identified. Where a well is the source of potable water, indicate its location on the site plan. If your water source is a well or hauled (and stored in a cistern or tank) you may be required to obtain a licence for a semi-public water system from the [Office of Drinking Water](#).
- Identify temperature-controlled rooms or processing areas.

Process Description

Include the following information:

- procedures for humane slaughter
- procedures for blood collection or disposal
- method of handling and disposal of inedible and condemned products

General Abattoir Construction Recommendations

Floors

Construct floors with a smooth, hard impervious material (e.g., concrete) and sloped to drain 1/8" – 1/4" per foot in killing, carcass dressing, coolers, and processing areas. Construct drains with a minimum of 4" inside diameter and a minimum of 40 square inches of free space.

Existing coolers may be approved without drains if sanitary conditions can be assured.

Cove the floor/wall joints for ease of cleaning and maintenance.

Walls

Construct walls with smooth, durable, and impervious materials that are free of cracks and flaking paint.

Exposed wood is not acceptable for new or remodeled facilities. Wood construction, dependent on-site evaluation, may be permitted in existing facilities subject to a negotiated time frame for replacement.

There are many materials on the market which may be suitable for wall construction, so consideration will be given to all suitable materials.

Ceilings

Construct ceilings of easily cleanable material and provide sufficient height to retain carcasses off the floor. A minimum height of 11 feet is recommended throughout the abattoir and a minimum of 16 feet for the bleeding hoist and on the bleeding rail for beef slaughter. Prevent carcasses on rails from contacting walls and pillars to minimize cross-contamination.

The purpose of designating these particular ceiling heights is to assure the free space between the floor and the head of the carcass is not less than 18 inches.

Lighting

Have adequate lighting for the processes being undertaken. All light should be shatter-resistant, or shielded, to avoid the risk of food contamination.

Ventilation

Have adequate ventilation for the operations undertaken and to prevent condensation and ice build-up.

Windows in meat plants are discouraged unless they are of a type, and installed in such a manner, that no contamination of meat food products can occur. For existing abattoirs, windows are acceptable, subject to site specific evaluation.

Water Supply

An adequate supply of potable water under pressure is required to meet the operational needs.

Sewage Disposal Systems

Have an adequate number of washrooms that do not open directly onto the processing and slaughter areas.

Have sewage disposal facilities – either municipal or private systems – separated from the slaughter and processing drainage systems.

Refrigeration Storage

Provide refrigerated storage facilities on the premises for all edible products that are separated from condemned and inedible products facilities.

Coolers need to be capable of maintaining a carcass temperature equal to, or lower than, 4 °C.

Freezers need to be capable of maintaining the carcass or meat frozen. It is recommended that processing rooms are kept at less than 10° C to prevent deterioration of meat products.

The requirements for refrigerated storage will depend on the site-specific operation and, accordingly, minimum sizes are not included.

Condemned and Inedible Products

Locate an inedible room to handle and store all condemned and inedible product in the abattoir, such that movement of contents from it to the outside for disposal does not contaminate the facility and the food product.

If arrangements with an approved renderer to empty inedible products at the end of the slaughter day cannot be made, consider refrigerating the inedible room to prevent pest harborage.

Solid Waste

Dispose of solid waste at a registered supervised waste disposal ground.

Pre-slaughter Holding

Design the pre-slaughter holding pens to protect animals from the elements, injuries, and unsanitary conditions.

Have a sufficient number of pens to separately hold animals of different species, lots, sexes, age and health conditions.

Ensure pens:

- have adequate size to prevent overcrowding
- are equipped with water and/or feed facilities (feed is provided if animals are held for more than 24 hours)
- are adequately ventilated to prevent build-up of ammonia
- conform to plant construction standards to facilitate the performance of ante-mortem examinations

Equipment

Provide the following equipment in abattoirs:

- stunning equipment appropriate for species; consider having a back-up stunner in vicinity
- restraining device, rattle paddles and prod for handling and moving animals
- dedicated knives for bleeding, removing hide, removing specified risk material in over 30- month-old beef carcasses and trimming carcasses
- electric or hand saw for splitting carcasses
- knife sanitizers maintained at 82°C, depending upon number of employees and working stations; a sanitizer dedicated to the bleeding area
- a hand washing facility with hot and cold potable water outlets on the slaughter floor, preferably hands-free
- hot water hose to rinse the inspection table equipment and floor (as needed)
- cold water hose to wash carcasses and to rinse salvaged organs
- a hoist for bleeding and skin dressing
- scald tank for hog carcasses
- rail system for moving carcasses from one station to the next
- dedicated food-grade containers for salvaged organs
- dedicated containers for inedible product
- a head inspection rack or table
- a viscera inspection truck for beef and hogs, alternatively a table is acceptable for hogs
- for rabbits and poultry:
 - an electric knife or a water bath system for electrical stunning
 - facilities to aid defeathering including a hot water tank to loosen feather and defeatherer machine to remove them (consider a wax tank to effectively remove feathers from geese/ducks)

- a suspension system for evisceration and inspection
- facilities for washing birds with potable water prior to evisceration
- evisceration hook or similar equipment to remove viscera intact
- facilities to wash and chill approved carcasses
- facilities to clean transportation crates and vehicles

Ensure rails, racks, hooks, gambrels, and all metal equipment are rust-resistant and kept clean, sanitary and in good repair.

Welfare Facilities

Employee welfare facilities include a suitably designed change room and lunchroom that can accommodate the number of employees.

Inspector's Office

Have a dedicated, appropriately equipped and sized office for a health officer (meat inspector) to complete administrative duties and store equipment related to inspection.

Provide the meat inspector with easy access to a lavatory, shower and change room.

Lack of an inspector's office may be permitted in an existing plant, subject to a reasonable designated space allocated for meat inspector use only.

For more information, email the [Food Safety and Inspection Branch](#).