

Agricultural Fences

FACT SHEET

DEFINITION

“Agricultural fence,” for purposes of IC 14-28-1-22.5, means a structure that is primarily used to keep animals in or out of an area that does not obstruct the flow of water or debris through a floodway.

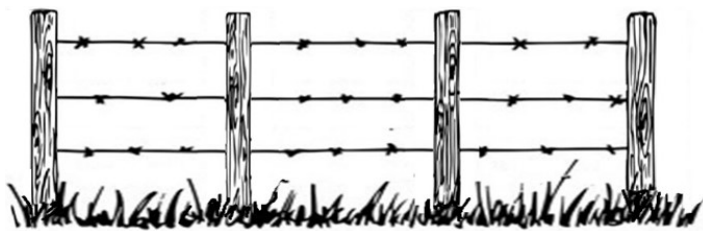
EXEMPTION

Pursuant to section 22.5 of the Flood Control Act (IC 14-28-1-22.5), a person is not required to obtain a permit to construct an agricultural fence in a floodway.

CROSSING A WATERWAY (NOT EXEMPT)

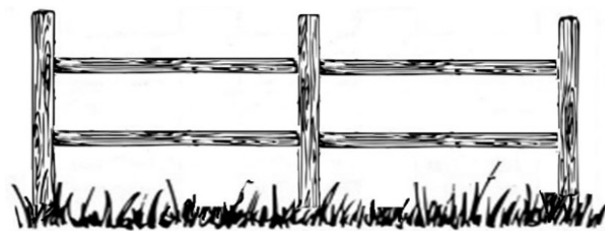
- Placing a fence within a navigable waterway is not permitted under this exemption. The Navigable Waterways roster can be found on the Natural Resources Commission website at IN.gov/nrc/nonrule-policy-documents-npd/
- Placing a fence across a non-navigable waterway should be avoided. If a fence is needed across a waterway, submit a plan and fence specifications to the Division of Water for review. Email: water_inquiry@dnr.IN.gov

ACCEPTABLE FENCES



Wood and Wire Fence

Simple posts with 2 or 3 horizontal rows of wire is the most preferred. With minimum number of wire, there is less chance the fence will catch floating and suspended debris that would otherwise increase the force of the flowing water placed on the fence.



Split Rail Fence

Another acceptable fence is split rail fence with two (2) rails spaced widely between posts.

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DNR
Indiana Department
of Natural Resources



FENCES NOT ALLOWED

- ▶ Chain Link
- ▶ Privacy
- ▶ Woven Wire
- ▶ Split Rail with too many rails

These fences get clogged with debris and become an obstruction to water flow.

Below are pictures of such agricultural fences illustrating those issues.

Woven Wire Fence



Post-Flood



Wooden Farm Fence



Post-Flood



LOCATION of Agricultural Fences

- ▶ Fences that run parallel to the direction of a flood are less likely to be damaged than those perpendicular to the direction of the flow.
- ▶ Flood frequency should be considered in the location of fencing.
- ▶ Fences that are well back from the mainstream channel or floodway are less prone to damage.
This is because both flow velocity and depth of flow decrease with the distance from the main channel. It follows that the more expensive or complex fencing should be located up slope from the main flood channel.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

POSTS and 2 or 3 WIRE or SPLIT RAIL FENCE

- ▶ The strength of a fence against floodwaters depends on spacing, depth and type of posts.
- ▶ The posts can be made of appropriately treated timber.
- ▶ The type of wire is also important: plain wire does not hold debris to the same extent as barbed wire or wire with verticals, e.g. hinge joint, ring lock or wire netting. Also maintaining wire tension helps to promote wire vibration which assists in minimizing debris load.
- ▶ The wires can be preferably high-tensile for strength and durability.
- ▶ Fence height is a critical factor in determining fence stability during flood events.
- ▶ Posts dug deep or well-secured to the ground are also less likely to push over in a flood. A driven post is also more likely to remain standing than one with loose soil around it. The soil type in which a post stands is also important. Posts standing in dry sandy soils require less force to push over than a fence in clay soils. Posts located closer together give a fence greater resistance to flow.