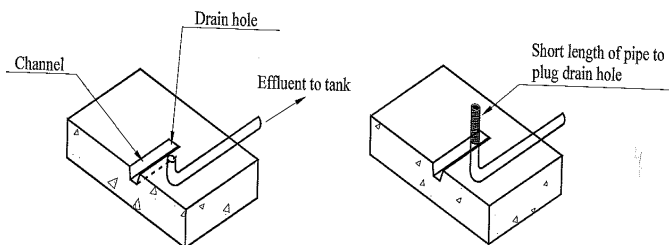


Operation of Diversion Systems

Monaghan County Council has encountered many problems in relation to poorly managed diversion systems including mixing of effluent with rainwater and the premature diversion of silage effluent to surface water drainage systems.



Diversion system : picture taken from Department of Agriculture Specification for Silage pits

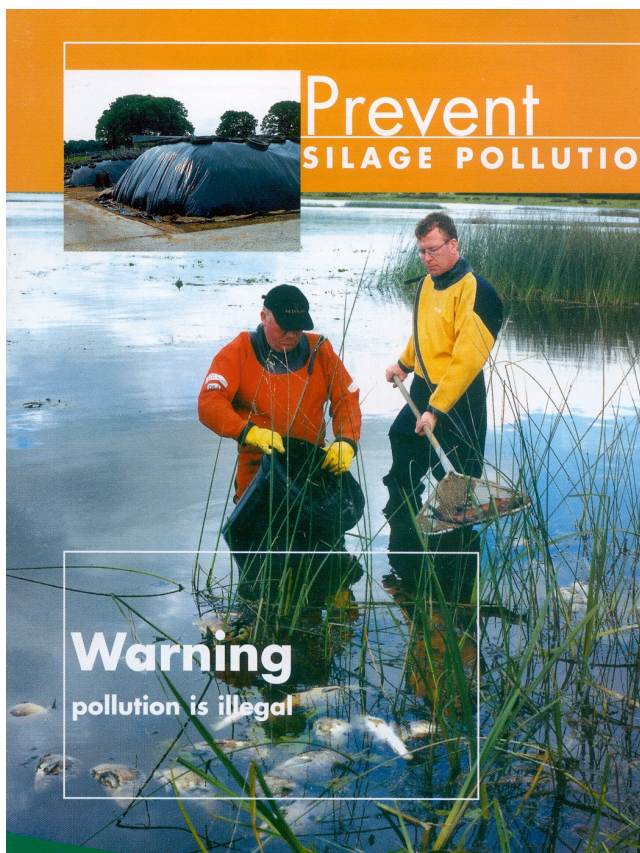
Check effluent **diver-**sion units, yard gullies or other possible un-derground escape routes.

Photo shows escape of silage effluent to a storm water gully



Baled Silage

Baled silage produced from wilted grass does not normally produce effluent and may be stored two bales high. It is now a legal requirement that silage bales shall be stored a minimum of **20m** from a surface watercourse or drinking water abstraction point. It is good practice not to open bales within 20m of a surface watercourse, lake or drinking water abstraction point.



Allowing silage effluent to discharge to a drain or watercourse is an offence under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 as amended by the Local Government (Water Pollution) (Amendment) Act, 1990 and the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2010

For further information contact:-

The Environment Section, Monaghan County Council. Tel: 042 9661240.

Your agricultural advisor.

Monaghan

COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CONTAE
MHUINEACHÁIN

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

PREVENT SILAGE POLLUTION

CUIR COSC AR THRUAILLIÚ SADHLAIS



An cháilíocht uisce á feabhsú

Tá Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin ag obair chun caighdeán an uisce a chosaint agus a fheabhsú ar fud Mhuineacháin.

Environment Section Monaghan County Council,

Revised March 2011

Preventing Pollution from Silage Effluent

Silage effluent is potentially the most potent source of pollution on the farm. Even when a small amount enters a watercourse, it can have a rapid and devastating effect on fish and plant life for a long distance downstream. Great care is needed in the making and monitoring of silage making facilities.



Silage effluent entering a watercourse causes profuse growth of "sewage fungus" as shown above.

Farmers are advised to **REGULARLY CHECK UNDERGROUND DRAINS AND STREAMS AROUND THE FARMYARD AFTER SILAGE MAKING.** Remember pollution incidents can occur several weeks after silage making.

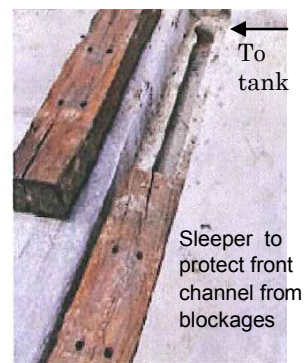
Déanann dea-chleachtais
talmhaíochta cáilíocht uisce a chosaint.

Silage Effluent

The volume of silage effluent produced can vary from a trickle to a flood. Place an **effective drainage system in the silo** before the grass is ensiled. Ensure silage is placed **behind** the channels. If you are using a contractor make sure to remind him/her to keep behind the channels. Silage effluent should be channelled to a leak proof storage tank. Closely monitor the effluent level in the tank and empty the tank at regular intervals—**never allow it to overflow.** Ensure silage effluent channels don't become **blocked** with ensiled grass.



Silage Pit—Side Channel



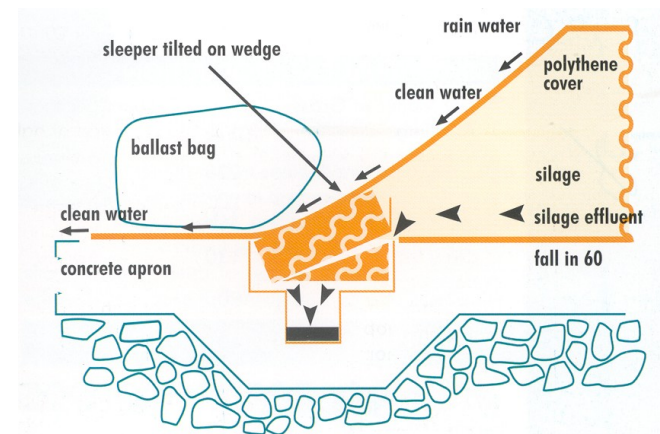
Silage Pit front Channel



Poor structures and lack of collection facilities may result in water pollution

Collection of Silage Effluent

All the silage effluent produced must be collected. It is important to avoid dilution with rain water as this increases the volume of material to be stored and handled. Rainwater from the silage pit cover should be diverted away from the tank (provided farmyard manure is not used) this can be done by extending the plastic cover beyond the front channel.



Effective clean water separation and silage effluent collection systems are a must.

Maintenance of Silage Pits

It is particularly important that all joints and cracks in floors and walls are fully sealed. A range of acid resistant sealants are available.

For detailed information and advice on silage pit repairs contact your Teagasc or Agricultural Adviser.