

# NEBRASKA

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DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



Pete Ricketts, Governor

**MAY 03 2018**

Jim Stewart, Plant Manager  
AltEn, LLC  
1344 County Road 10  
Mead, NE 68041

William Wehrbein  
Mead Cattle Company, LLC  
1344 County Road 10  
Mead, NE 68041

RE: Environmental Concern Investigation  
Complaint: #041018-AB-1328  
NDEQ ID: 84069  
Program ID: NE0204447 (IWM)

Dear Mr. Stewart,

On April 9 & 10, 2018, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) received two separate complaints regarding environmental concerns allegedly caused by AltEn, LLC (AltEn). Specifically, the concerns related to material being delivered by AltEn to farm fields around the Mead, NE area and being land applied. Some of the allegations expressed in the two complaints received were; dogs getting sick from eating the material and odors from the material causing people to be sick.

The department contacted you by telephone on April 10, 2018, regarding the complaint received on April 9, 2018. You informed the department that AltEn was delivering wet distillers grain (WDG) to area fields for land application. You acknowledged that you were aware of the complaint regarding dogs becoming sick from eating the material and shared that representatives from AltEn had discussed the issue with the complainant. You were made aware of the second complaint received by the department regarding the odor issue on April 12, 2018, which prompted a meeting and site investigation later that day.

As you are aware, the Letter of Warning (LOW) issued to AltEn on December 18, 2017, requires the facility to remove approximately 26,000 cubic yards of WDG no later than August 15, 2018. The facility's response letter dated January 11, 2018, indicated that the WDG would be land applied and/or processed through the gasification plant producing Biochar.

During our site investigation on April 12, 2018, we observed the storage area for the WDG located on the north side of the facility as well as two different farm fields where WDG had been delivered for land application. These fields are identified on a Google Earth image attached to the enclosed report. While an odor was noticeable when visiting these areas, it was not considered offensive to any members of our staff. Although there are no department regulations concerning odors, this does not preclude you from determining if there be local ordinances that apply. Lastly, we did not observe any sick and/or dead animals while visiting these areas.

Department of Environmental Quality

P.O. Box 98922

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Jim Macy, Director

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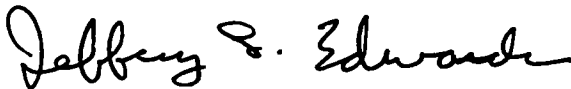


After talking with you by telephone and visiting with you and your staff during our site investigation, it has been determined that AltEn is not in violation of any department regulations concerning solid waste. You may continue to land apply WDG with the understanding that it has nutrient value and is being applied at proper agronomic rates. You are encouraged to incorporate best management practices when land applying the WDG. Some of which are incorporate the material in a timely manner and land apply when winds are in a favorable direction.

The department encourages you to continue to work with the Village of Mead to alleviate any concerns by residents as well as address any question/concerns with residents that may call your facility directly.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Jason Holsten at (402) 471-4218.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffery L. Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffery L. Edwards  
Compliance Unit Supervisor  
Waste Management Section

JLE/jph

Enclosures