



LaFarm Irrigation Tank Cleaning Procedure

Department of Public Safety - Environmental, Health and Safety
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) #45

Lafayette College LaFarm Irrigation Tank Cleaning Procedure

Department of Public Safety – Environmental, Health and Safety

Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) #45 – Revised May 9, 2024

Purpose

Procedure for annual cleaning of the LaFarm green irrigation tank NW of the farm greenhouse. Annual cleaning in March on a cool clear day.

Scope

Outline the safe practices for annual irrigation tank cleaning.

Notification Procedure

Two weeks prior to tank cleaning, LaFarm representative will notify EHS ([Public Safety - EHS](#)).

Personnel Required

Tank cleaner and two assistants

Equipment Requirements

- 5 to 10 sturdy two-gallon buckets with handles
- Scoop shovel,
- Hose with spray nozzle
- Hook ladder
- Wheelbarrow

PPE Required

- Waterproof boots for the person inside the tank.
- Cell phone for all involved, in case of emergency

Procedure

1. Shut off electricity to float in tank. Switch located inside the red tool shed.
2. Bring all tools to the outside of the tank and hook up garden hoses from greenhouse to reach the tank.
3. The tank cleaner, with waterproof boots on, climbs the “jungle gym” around the tank and removes the tank lid, handing it down to an assistant on the ground.
4. One assistant hand the hook ladder up to the tank cleaner, who lowers it into the tank and uses it to descend inside.
5. Assistant one climbs to the top of the tank. Assistant two hands the shovels and buckets up to assistant one, who then hands them down to the tank cleaner inside the tank.

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6. The tank cleaner uses the scoop shovel to fill the buckets with clay from the bottom of the tank, being careful not to overfill them and make them too heavy. As the buckets fill up, he lifts them over his head and ensures that the handle of the bucket is facing up. Assistant one grabs the handle and lifts the bucket out of the tank, then hands it down to assistant two, who dumps it into the wheelbarrow and hands the bucket back to assistant one, who can then hand it back down to the tank cleaner inside the tank. This process continues until all clay is removed from the bottom of the tank.
7. Assistant two now hands the hose with spray nozzle up to assistant one, who hands it down to the tank cleaner inside the tank. The tank cleaner then sprays any remaining clay off the walls of the tank, and uses a combination of the shovel and the spray nozzle to force the water and clay mix to one end of the tank.
8. The tank cleaner now uses the buckets to bail the water out of the tank, handing them up to assistant one in the same manner as with the clay. Assistant one dumps the water on the ground off the side of the tank. This continues until there is no water left in the tank.
9. The tank cleaner now hands all remaining equipment in the tank up to assistant one, who hands them down to assistant two. Assistant two now climbs down. The tank cleaner climbs the ladder out of the tank, and removes the ladder, handing it down to an assistant on the ground. The assistant hands the tank lid up to the tank cleaner, who secures it and climbs down to the ground.
10. The outside of the tank is cleaned using the spray hose, and the clay in the wheelbarrow may be dumped or saved for student projects.