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N.C. Utilities Commission

N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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REGISTRATION OPENS MONDAY FOR STATE'S METHANE CAPTURE PILOT PROGRAM

RALEIGH – Starting Monday, swine farmers can register for possible participation in a new state program that aims to convert the methane from swine waste into electricity.

The N.C. Utilities Commission and the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources are administering the program.

In 2007, the General Assembly created the Swine Farm Methane Capture Pilot Program through Senate Bill 1465. The program authorized the commission and department to select up to 50 registered swine farms to capture methane gas generated by their waste systems – either by full or partial lagoon covers – and use the gas to generate electricity. These methane conversion systems must be operational with electricity available for purchase on or before Sept. 1, 2010.

If a selected farm is served by Duke Energy, Progress Energy or Dominion, that electric utility must buy the generated electricity for seven years. The Utilities Commission has initiated a proceeding to set a suggested purchase price for electricity produced by farms selected for the pilot program. People or organizations that want to participate in that price-setting proceeding must intervene and file testimony by March 28. For more information, go to <http://www.ncuc.net> and search for Docket No. E-100, Sub 115.

The Division of Soil and Water Conservation will oversee the pilot program's registration process. Swine farm owners or operators wishing to participate must complete a simple, online application in order to be considered for the program. There is no obligation to participate when registering. Once a farm is selected, the farm and its electric power supplier would determine the terms of power sale and interconnection agreements. Applications will be accepted on the Web-based registry starting at 9 a.m., on Monday, March 10.

For more information, updates or to register, go to: http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/animal_waste.html . For questions about the registration process, please contact Vernon Cox, chief of the Technical Services Section with the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation, at (919) 715-6109 or vernon.cox@ncmail.net. For questions related to the Utilities Commission process, please contact Kimberly J. Jones, public utilities industry analyst with the State Utilities Commission, at (919) 733-0846 or kjones@ncuc.net .

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