

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Montana

**Operation and Maintenance Guide  
For Your  
Surface Irrigation System**

Operator: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Sec. \_\_\_\_\_, T. \_\_\_\_\_, R. \_\_\_\_\_  
NRCS Office \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*A properly operated and maintained surface irrigation system is an asset to your property. The estimated life span of this installation is at least 10 years. The life of this installation can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program. This checklist is provided for your convenience in order to help you develop a good operation and maintenance plan.*

**OPERATION CHECKLIST**

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- r Operate the system at design rates or adjust flow rates to provide uniform distribution throughout the border or furrows. Water should reach the end of the border or furrows so as to minimize runoff yet maintain as uniform application throughout the length of the system as possible. Guidance in accomplishing this is contained in accompanying material.
- r Use design border or furrow spacing in accordance with the design plan.
- r Schedule irrigations based on the chosen moisture monitoring method.
- r Set times should not be longer than necessary to replace moisture depletion.
- r Monitor the site for irrigation caused erosion. Modify the application rate or time of set, or provide soil cover to reduce erosion.
- r Make sure tailwater is promptly removed by a drainage or tailwater recovery system.
- r Erosion caused sediment should be contained on the site by appropriate methods.

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