

The National Animal Identification System: Frequently Asked Questions About the Premises ID

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The proposed National Animal Identification System (NAIS) will contain two identification components: Premises Identification and Individual Animal Identification. The Premises Identification component will be implemented prior to the Individual Animal Identification component. Currently, producers are being encouraged to register for Premises ID in each state.

The state animal health authorities in each state are developing the Premises ID systems. The Texas Animal Health Commission has this responsibility in Texas. In neighboring states, the responsibility lies with the governmental department housing the State Veterinarian. The definition of a premises and requirements for registration may vary from state to state. A key fact to remember is: the Premises ID is assigned to a geographical location and remains with that location regardless of changing ownership or lessees.

This factsheet addresses some questions frequently asked by producers in the state. If you have other questions, please contact the Texas Animal Health Commission or your local Texas Cooperative Extension office.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a Premises ID?

A: The Premises ID is a number that uniquely identifies a location where livestock are handled or commingled. Once the NAIS is fully implemented, the Individual Animal ID number will provide information on which animals are or were present at a location and the Premises ID will provide information on where the animals are currently located or were located in the past.

Q: Why is a Premises ID important?

A: The Premises ID is an integral component of the NAIS. In the event of a disease outbreak, the NAIS Premises ID will describe the location of the outbreak. In addition, other adjoining and potentially affected premises will be identified by their GPS coordinates. Animal health officials would then contact the person(s) listed as the primary contact on the Premises ID registrations. The system will use the Premises ID in conjunction with Individual Animal ID to locate animals that had been on a premises and possibly exposed to a disease.

Q: Should I be in a hurry to register for a Premises ID?

A: The current timeline for implementation of the NAIS indicates that premises must be registered by 2008. Although this proposed mandatory deadline is in the future, producers are encouraged to register their premises as soon as possible. Initiating the process now allows time to correct any problems that may be encountered during the registration process.

Currently, you may obtain a premises ID at no charge from the Texas Animal Health Commission. However, in the future there may be a registration fee.

Q: What will my Premises ID look like?

A: The Premises ID is a unique 7 character alphanumeric (combination of letters and numbers) ID for a specific geographic location. The exact location of the premises is described by GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates. A fictitious example of a Premises ID number would be 0025DQ2.

Q: How do I apply for a Premises ID?

A: In Texas, you have two choices:

- 1) Apply online at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us>
- 2) Fill out an application and submit it to the Texas Animal Health Commission by e-Mail, postal mail or fax. (addresses below)

Applications may be downloaded or printed from the TAHC website:

http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/animal_id/TAHC_Form05-01_NAIS_Registration.rtf.

Q: Are premises registered annually?

A: No. Once a Premises ID is assigned to a property, it is permanent. Currently, we are not aware of a requirement to re-register properties annually.

If a property changes ownership, or the primary contact for that property changes, then the contact information associated with the property must be changed.

Q: Is it necessary to know the GPS coordinates for the site?

A: The Premises ID system requires a location for the premises. If you know the correct 911 address for the property, the system should be able to determine the GPS coordinates. Likewise, if you provide the GPS coordinates, the system

should be able to determine the 911 address. However, there have been reports of incorrect assignments of GPS coordinates to 911 addresses and vice versa. Hence, you need to determine the proper GPS coordinates before you register to ensure the information on the registration is correct.

The system does not require the GPS coordinates for the entire property. Only the GPS coordinates for the headquarters or entrance to the property are necessary.

Q: What if I do not know the GPS coordinates for my property?

A: There are several options:

1) If you apply for a premises ID online and if the property has a 911 address that is listed in the USDA Database, GPS coordinates will automatically be inserted in your application form. However, you need to verify that the coordinates are correct. Reports from applicants indicate some of the coordinates furnished are incorrect.

2) Numerous people in the community have GPS units: Natural Resource Conservation Service personnel, some County Extension Agents, law enforcement, emergency medical professionals, civil engineers, surveyors, herbicide/pesticide applicators, sportsmen, some city/county government personnel, etc.

3) There are several Internet sites where you can locate your property and the GPS coordinates or purchase topographic maps complete with GPS coordinates. For instance, at <http://terraser-usa.com/> you can purchase maps with coordinates or you can locate your property online and determine the coordinates. Other services such as this are available.

Q: I have a backgrounding/preconditioning yard, a reproductive service laboratory, a vet clinic, an auction barn, a commission company, a livestock show/fairground, a custom processing plant, etc.... do I need a Premises ID?

A: Any location where livestock are handled and or commingled will need a Premises ID.

Q: I own grazing land but I do not own livestock. My grazing is leased out to others and I care for their livestock while they are on my land. Do I need a Premises ID?

A: A specific answer to this question will probably require a more detailed description of the type of livestock, length of time they are present, and other factors.

Based on discussions with TAHC, if the grazing is temporary or seasonal, you may not need a Premises ID. However, other arrangements such as a long-term lease for cow-calf production may require a Premises ID. One consideration in this case is that the owner of the cowherd may need a Premises ID number in order to purchase Individual ID tags in the future. If the herd owner does not own other property where cattle are housed, then the herd owner will need a Premises ID for your property in order to comply with NAIS and obtain ID tags for the calves.

In these situations, you should consult TAHC for their recommendations.

Q: My child, grandchild, foster child, etc., has a 4H/FFA project at my house. Do we need a Premises ID?

A: Yes. You are handling livestock on your property, therefore you need a premises ID.

Q: My child, grandchild, foster child, etc., has a 4H/FFA project at someone else's house or ranch or at the club/chapter barn. Do we need a Premises ID?

A: The location where the animal is kept will need a Premises ID.

Q: What if I have livestock at more than one geographical location? Do I need to get separate premises IDs?

A: According to TAHC, if livestock from the different locations are commingled (moved back and forth and mixed), then all can be managed under one premises ID. If livestock on the properties are managed independent of each other (no commingling), then securing a premises ID for each property would be wise. However, each situation is unique, so it would be worth the effort to consult with TAHC personnel if you have a question.

Q: I have different livestock species on my place. Do I need separate Premises IDs for the different species?

A: No. The same Premises ID covers all species.

Q: I have properties in two (or more) counties. Do I need a Premises ID for each one?

A: Our understanding is that you do not have to register for separate Premises IDs simply because the properties are in different counties. If livestock from the operations are commingled (moved back and forth and mixed), then you may need only one premises ID. If there is no commingling, then you must decide whether you need one or more. If a great distance separates the properties, the exposure to a disease outbreak may be different at each location and you may desire to have separate premises IDs.

Q: My land straddles the state line. Do I need Premises IDs in both states?

A: Yes. Officials in both states need to have a premises ID in their system.

Q: I have more than one set of working facilities/pens on my property. Do I need a separate Premises ID for each?

A: No. The Premises ID is for the entire property, not for each set of working facilities on the property.

Q: I have one type of cattle (stockers, commercial cows, purebred cows) at one place and something else (stockers, commercial cows, purebred cows) at another place, do I need separate Premises IDs?

A: If the cattle are not commingled, then you may consider having separate Premises IDs. In the event of a disease outbreak at one location, separate Premises IDs may prevent quarantine of the other location.

Q: What should I do with my Premises ID if I go out of business, die, lose the business in a divorce or bankruptcy or business split, my offspring/students no longer raise animals?

A: The premises ID stays with the property regardless of whether you, your former bank, your former spouse, or your heirs own the property. The contact information will change, but the Premises ID will not. If a situation calls for the ownership of a property to be divided (ex-spouse, heirs, ex-business partners), then some additional premises registrations *may* be required for the divided properties. If the land is taken out of livestock production permanently (for instance, subdivided for commercial development) then the Premises ID no longer has any application and should be retired.

Q: What if more than one person operates on the same property (i.e. partnership, family members, etc.)? Do we need more than one Premises ID?

A: No. Again, the Premises ID is assigned to the property, and contacts are listed for the premises. So, if livestock are owned by different individuals but managed on the same property, only one Premises ID is required. The various ownership interests should be listed as contacts on the registration form.

For instance, think about a custom feedyard. The property is owned by the feedyard. Different individuals own the cattle in the pens. Each individual cattle owner will not register for a Premises ID. The feedyard will register for a single Premises ID.

Q: If I ranch on lease property, who should apply for the Premises ID, the landowner (lessor) or me? What if I lose the lease?

A: The Premises ID is assigned to the property not the livestock owner. In this instance, the landowner can apply for the Premises ID and list the lessee as a contact on the registration. Or, the lessee can apply for the Premises ID and list himself or herself as a contact.

In either situation, if the lease arrangement is terminated, the Premises ID will stay with the property. The contact information on the premises registration will change. The former lessee should make certain that the contact information is changed and they are no longer on the premises registration. To avoid confusion in the system, the best alternative is for the landowner, not the lessee, to register for the premises ID.

Q: In the event I give up or lose a lease, what happens to the premises ID for that property? When the subsequent lessee applies for a premises ID, will it create confusion in the Premises ID database?

A: The premises ID is assigned to a property and remains assigned to the property. Everytime the lease on a single property changes hands, the lessees change but the Premises ID remains the same. Only the contact information on the premises registration needs to change.

Q: I own cattle but the land they graze on is leased. The only property I own is my home and the cattle are never on that property. Do I need a Premises ID? If yes, what do I register? If no, how will I obtain individual ID tags in the future?

A: If you will need Individual Animal ID tags in the future, then you will need to have a Premises ID because in the proposed NAIS, the tags are distributed to and assigned to a Premises ID.

In the case of your livestock residing on leased property, then the leased property will need a Premises ID. To avoid confusion in the system, the landowner, not the lessee should register for a Premises ID. As the lessee, you may have to work with the property owner to accomplish this. On the Premises ID registration, you the lessee may be listed as either the primary or secondary contact for the premises.

Q: I own cattle but I do not own property. I lease my house and the land on which my cattle graze. Do I need a premises number? If yes, what do I register? If no, how will I obtain individual ID tags in the future?

A: If you will need Individual Animal ID tags in the future, then you will need to have a Premises ID because in the proposed NAIS, the tags are distributed to and assigned to a Premises ID.

In the case of your livestock residing on leased property, then the leased property will need a Premises ID. The owner of the property should register the property for a Premises ID. As the lessee, you may have to work with the property owner to accomplish this. On the Premises ID registration, you the lessee may be listed as either the primary or secondary contact for the Premises.

To avoid confusion in the system, the landowner, not the lessee should register the premises.

Contact Information

Texas Animal Health Commission

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