



ALTERNATE USES FOR PONDS

Many small farm ponds are used for livestock watering, rural fire control, waterfowl and wildlife habitat, and improving the landscape. Although many of these uses are generally compatible, certain management practices or modifications may be required. These options should be considered before constructing a pond, if possible.

Livestock Watering

When livestock are allowed direct access to watering ponds, they tend to stir up mud and cause excessive turbidity, reducing pond productivity, spawning success and quality of fishing. This problem can be eliminated by constructing or modifying drainage structures to allow for watering troughs outside the pond and by limiting shoreline access by livestock. Ponds used for watering livestock should be well-spaced throughout the grazing area. In smooth, level areas, livestock should not have to travel more than one mile to reach a watering pond. This distance should be reduced to 1/4 mile in rough, hilly country. (see Figure 1)

Fire Control

If ponds are to be relied on for fire control, adequate pumping equipment and hoses will be required. Plan to use a stream of at least 250 gallons per minute at a pressure of no less than 50 psi. This rate of usage will consume 1/4 acre-foot in a 5-hour period. Install at least one dry hydrant, and secure a centrifugal pump and an appropriate length of high-quality fire hose with a nozzle. (see Figure 2)

Wildlife Habitat

Ponds can attract many types of wildlife if human disturbances are minimal and sufficient cover and access are provided. Migratory waterfowl often use relatively isolated ponds as temporary resting places and feeding sites. A shallow area can be developed along one side of the pond to enhance wildlife use, but this shallow habitat may complicate weed control if the rest of the pond does not have a steep drop-off.

Swimming

If ponds are to be used for swimming, they should be free from potential pesticide or sewage contamination and submerged obstructions such as logs, branches, stumps or old fencing. A relatively shallow, gently sloping area is recommended to facilitate access.





Figure 1. Modified drain to service a watering trough

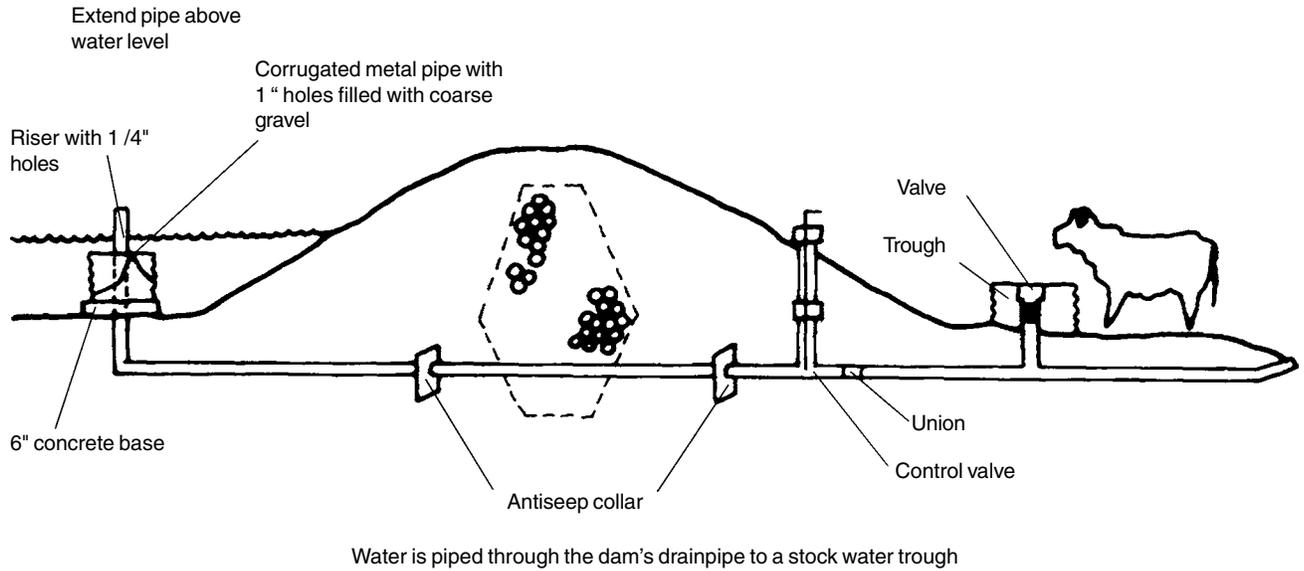
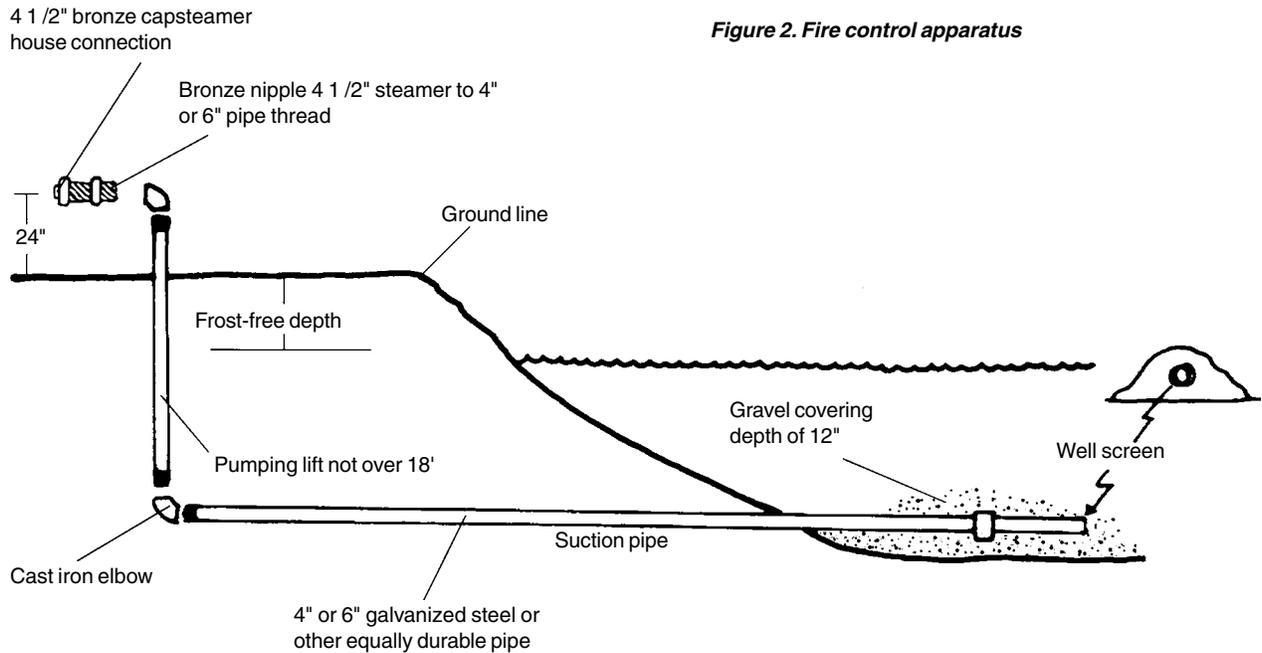


Figure 2. Fire control apparatus



A Typical Dry Hydrant System