

Stormwater and the Construction Industry

Protect Natural Features



Bad



Good

- Minimize clearing.
- Minimize the amount of exposed soil.
- Identify and protect areas where existing vegetation, such as trees, will not be disturbed by construction activity.
- Protect streams, stream buffers, wild woodlands, wetlands, or other sensitive areas from any disturbance or construction activity by fencing or otherwise clearly marking these areas.

Construction Phasing



Bad



Good

- Sequence construction activities so that the soil is not exposed for long periods of time.
- Schedule or limit grading to small areas.
- Install key sediment control practices before site grading begins.
- Schedule site stabilization activities, such as landscaping, to be completed immediately after the land has been graded to its final contour.

Vegetative Buffers



Bad



Good

- Protect and install vegetative buffers along streams and wetlands to slow and filter stormwater runoff.
- Maintain buffers by mowing or replanting to ensure their effectiveness.

Silt Fencing



Bad



Good

- Inspect and maintain silt fences after each rainstorm.
- Make sure the bottom of the silt fence is buried in the ground.
- Securely attach the material to the stakes.
- Don't place silt fences in the middle of a waterway or use them as a check dam.
- Make sure stormwater is not flowing around the silt fence.

Maintain your BMPs!

www.epa.gov/npdes/menuofbmps

Construction Entrances



Bad



Good

- Remove mud and dirt from the tires of construction vehicles before they enter a paved roadway.
- Properly size entrance BMPs for all anticipated vehicles.
- Make sure that the construction entrance does not become buried in soil.

Slopes



Bad



Good

- Rough grade or terrace slopes.
- Break up long slopes with sediment barriers, or under drain, or divert stormwater away from slopes.

Dirt Stockpiles



Bad



Good

- Cover or seed all dirt stockpiles.

Stormwater



Bad

- Use rock or sediment control structures to slow and filter stormwater runoff.
- Make sure the structure is properly installed and maintained.
- If you use a structure, make sure it is properly installed and maintained.

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Planning and Implementing Erosion and Sediment Control

The construction industry is a critical participant in the nation's efforts to protect streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and oceans. Through the use of best management practices (BMPs), construction site operators are the key defense against erosion and sedimentation.

As stormwater flows over a construction site, it picks up pollutants like sediment, debris, and chemicals. High volumes of stormwater can also cause stream bank erosion, and destroy downstream aquatic habitat. Preventing soil erosion and sedimentation is an important responsibility at all construction sites.

In addition to the environmental impact, uncontrolled erosion can have a significant financial impact on a construction project. It costs money and time to repair gullies, replace vegetation, clean sediment-clogged storm drains, replace poorly installed BMPs, and mitigate damage to other people's property or to natural resources.

Best Management Practice (BMP)

A BMP is a method used to prevent or control stormwater runoff and the discharge of pollutants, including sediment, into local waterbodies. Silt fences, inlet protection, and site-stabilization techniques are typical BMPs on a construction site.

Operator

An operator is someone who has control over and the ability to modify construction plans and specifications (e.g. owner, general contractor) or

Someone who has control over the day-to-day operations at a site (e.g., owner, general contractor) that are necessary to ensure compliance with the permit requirements. It is the responsibility of a construction site owner or operator to contain stormwater runoff and prevent erosion during all stages of a project.

There may be more than one person at a site who meets these definitions and must apply for permit coverage. (States may have different definitions of the term "operator".)

Developing and Implementing a Plan

You must have a Plan that includes erosion and sediment control and pollution prevention BMPs. These Plans require

- Advance planning and training to ensure proper implementation of the BMPs
- Erosion and sediment control BMPs in place until the area is permanently stabilized
- Pollution prevention BMPs to keep the construction site "clean"
- Regular inspection of the construction site to ensure proper installation and maintenance of BMPs

Fortunately, the practices and measures that must be included in your Plan are already part of the standard operating procedures at many construction sites.

Six steps are associated with developing and implementing a stormwater Plan. There's a wealth of information available on developing pollution prevention plans. Please contact your permitting authority for help in finding additional guidance materials, or visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater. A sample construction plan is available at www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/sample_swppp.pdf.

1. Site Evaluation and Design Development

- Collect site information
- Develop site plan design
- Prepare pollution prevention site map

The first step in preparing a Plan is to define the characteristics of the site and the type of construction that will occur. This involves collecting site information, identifying natural features that should be protected, developing a site plan design, describing the nature of the construction activity, and preparing a pollution prevention site map.

2. Assessment

4. Certification and Notification

- Certify the Plan
- Submit permit application or notification

Once the Plan has been developed, an authorized representative must certify the Plan. Your permit might require that the Plan be kept on site and available for the staff implementing the Plan.

Erosion and sedimentation control practices are only as good as the installation and maintenance.

5. Implementing and Maintaining a Plan