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NEW HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL

As the proud owner of a new home, establishing a lawn and landscaping are likely two of the many items on your growing "to do" list. If your home does not have an established lawn or landscaping, there are some important items to keep in mind to prevent soil and debris from leaving your property.

Why is Erosion and Sediment Control so Important?

Soil erosion and sedimentation are major contributors to pollution in our waterways. When rain falls on exposed soil, it washes soil away from the land. Runoff erodes bare ground, washes away valuable topsoil, and makes landscaping more difficult. It also carries nutrients, sediment, and other pollutants into streets, gutters, and ditches, where it then travels untreated to lakes, rivers, streams, or wetlands. Polluted runoff causes excessive growth of lake weeds, algae blooms, and reduced recreational opportunities such as swimming and fishing. Sediment-laden runoff clogs pipes, ponds, lakes, and wetlands and increases the risk of flooding.

Temporary Stabilization

During home construction, verify that your builder has installed temporary stabilization measures to minimize erosion and prevent sediment-laden runoff from leaving your property. Sediment control measures should be in-place on the down slope perimeter and near gutters, ditches, and all surface water and wetlands. Mulch, erosion control blanket, or similar materials must cover exposed soil. Permits from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and other local units of government may be required before you begin construction.

Permanent Stabilization

Establish permanent vegetation or ground cover as soon as possible. With proper planning, it may be possible to skip many temporary stabilization measures by installing permanent stabilization measures right away. Mulch, silt fences, downspout extenders, or other temporary stabilization measures can be removed following permanent stabilization. When landscaping, please consider the following:

- ✦ Keep and protect existing native plants on your property
- ✦ Remove invasive, non-native species (such as buckthorn)
- ✦ Schedule landscaping projects for dry weather
- ✦ Plant fast-growing annual and perennial grasses
- ✦ Use low-maintenance native plants that reduce runoff
- ✦ Use lawn alternatives like rain gardens or no-mow lawn mixes
- ✦ Route downspouts to heavily vegetated areas
- ✦ Use alternatives to impervious surfaces for walkways, patios, and drives that allow water to seep into the ground
- ✦ Leave an unmowed buffer strip of thick vegetation along stream banks and lakeshores



The steep slope in front of this new home will have to be re-graded because of poor erosion control practices.

Erosion and Sediment Control Practices for Homeowners

Mulch



Requirements: If not being actively graded, slopes should be stabilized within one to three weeks. Mulch is a recommended practice for stabilization.

Installation: Mulch should be spread at a rate of 2 tons/acre. Anchor with either a tackifying agent or by disk anchoring.

Maintenance: Inspect and replace all mulch that has been dislocated or failed.

Silt Fence



Requirements: Perimeter control is required before construction can begin.

Installation: Silt fence should be installed along the contour and trenched into the ground at least 6". Posts should be spaced no more than 8 feet apart.

Maintenance: Inspect weekly or after each ½" rain event. Silt fence must be cleaned out or replaced when silt reaches 2/3 the height of the fence.

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Other Erosion and Sediment Control Practices

Vegetation



Requirements: If not being actively graded, positive slopes within 200' feet of a stormwater conveyance or water body must be stabilized within one to three weeks, depending on the slope. Temporary vegetation should be combined with mulch, erosion control blanket, or hydraulic soil stabilizers.

Installation: MnDOT-recommended temporary seeding rates for 100B Winter Wheat 110B Oats and 130B Oats, Winter Wheat, Rye Grass, and Alfalfa are 100lbs per acre.

Maintenance: Reseeding if it fails to grow. May need mowing or spraying to control noxious weeds.

Erosion Control Blankets



Requirements: Erosion control blanket is a recommended practice for stabilizing 3:1 and steeper slopes or the normal wetted perimeters of ditches.

Installation: Erosion control blanket must be trenched in at the top of the slope and stapled at a rate of 1.5 to 2 staples per square yard depending on slope steepness and blanket type.

Maintenance: Must be inspected weekly and after .5" rainfall events.

Temporary Slope Drains



Requirements: Recommended for conveying runoff down sensitive slopes. Temporary slope drains are chutes, hoses, tubes, or pipes used to convey runoff safely down a slope and prevent gully formation.

Installation: Upslope stormwater runoff is directed to slope drains with diversions. Slope drain outlets may require hold-down stakes and energy dissipation and must be directed to stabilized vegetated areas or sediment basins.

Maintenance: Slope drains must be inspected weekly and after .5" rainfall events.

Inlet Protection



Requirements: All storm drain inlets must be protected by appropriate BMPs until all sources with potential for discharging to the inlet have been stabilized.

Installation: Reusable drop-in structures are recommended and should fit into the inlet properly. Inlet barrier systems should be secured to the ground and completely cover the inlet.

Maintenance: Inlet protection must be inspected weekly or after .5" rain events. Sediment must be removed promptly.

Beyond Construction: What You can do to Control Stormwater Water Pollution

You can help area lakes and streams for as long as you own your home. Stormwater runoff does not go to a wastewater treatment plant; it flows directly into our lakes and streams. Ways to reduce your home's environmental impact include:

- ⊕ Minimizing the use of pesticides fertilizers and de-icing materials
- ⊕ Properly disposing of hazardous wastes
- ⊕ Washing your car on the lawn
- ⊕ Using a no-phosphorus lawn fertilizer
- ⊕ Keeping trash and yard clippings out of the street and storm drains

Prepared by the Washington Conservation District. For more information, please contact the Washington Conservation District office at 651-275-1136.