



INTRODUCTION TO EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL

This fact sheet has been prepared by the Washington County Conservation District to briefly introduce one of Washington County's most significant environmental concerns. Soil erosion and sediment pollution is a problem occurring not only in this county, but throughout Pennsylvania. One of the Conservation District's main functions is to ensure that minimal erosion & sedimentation to the Waters of the Commonwealth be allowed to take place.

Earth disturbance activities, big or small, are a prime cause of erosion & sedimentation. Not only is conserving soil and protecting streams beneficial to the environment, but it is also the law.

PA Code Title 25, Chapter 102 (Erosion and Sediment Control), and PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) rules and regulations, state that persons proposing / conducting earth disturbance activities are required to develop, implement, and maintain BMPs to minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation.

WHAT ARE EROSION CONTROLS?

Erosion controls, or BMPs (Best Management Practices) are facilities, measures, or procedures used to prevent erosion and sedimentation, and to protect the quality of Waters of the Commonwealth.

Examples of Erosion Controls

- Silt fence
- Sediment traps and basins
- Channels
- Rock construction entrances
- Inlet protection

WHEN ARE CONTROLS NEEDED?

Controls are needed any time bare (unvegetated) earth is exposed and the potential for accelerated erosion exists; during any earth disturbance activity; and until the site is permanently stabilized.

Examples of Earth Disturbance Activities

- Residential developments
- Commercial developments
- Borrow / waste areas
- Timber harvesting
- Utility line / roadway installations

ARE PERMITS REQUIRED?

Permits are often required, usually depending on the size or nature of the disturbance activity.

The following is a general summary of requirements:

Description of Disturbance	Requirements
Less than 1 acre	Use of controls
1 – 5 ac without a point source discharge	E&S Plan Approval
1 – 5 acres with a point source discharge	NPDES Permit
More than 5 acres	NPDES Permit
Borrow / Waste Areas	See Fact Sheet
Timber Harvesting Operations	See Fact Sheet
Projects Involving Streams or Wetlands*	See Fact Sheet

* Proposed projects in or near streams or wetlands often require Chapter 105 Water Obstruction & Encroachment General Permits. See *Chapter 105 General Permits Fact Sheet*, or consult the Conservation District before any work is done in or around these protected areas.

Planning is the key to keeping on schedule with proposed earth disturbance activities. Plans and permit applications are reviewed in the order they are received, and initial review may take up to 30 days. Contact the District office if any additional information or assistance is needed.