

General Winter Site Maintenance



Winter brings many challenges to maintaining an effective Erosion and Sedimentation control plan on construction sites. Winter rains and snow, freezing and thawing of the ground, and spring melt and rains can produce significant flow, greatly increasing the potential for erosion. Once the winter season hits in full force, the stabilization measures available to owner/operators become limited. So, ideally, construction sites should be stabilized in anticipation of winter for the best results. Be proactive rather than reactive. Knowing that this doesn't always happen, here are some E&S measures to be implemented during winter months.

- **Interim site stabilization** – All exposed soils should be immediately stabilized with winter seed such as winter rye or winter wheat and straw mulch at a rate of three tons per acre or erosion control blanket or other approved E&S products. When using straw mulch, an anchoring product such as tackifier should be used to keep the straw in place for the season.
- **Silt Fence** – It is imperative that all silt fences on site be properly installed and maintained. Frozen ground does not lend itself to silt fence installation, so again, be proactive rather than reactive. Snow should not be piled against silt fence for obvious reasons. The required weekly site inspections by owner/operators will go a long way in silt fence upkeep.
- **Soil Stockpiles** – All soil stockpiles must be protected with anchored down straw mulch and winter seed at a rate of three tons per acre and silt fencing installed at least on the down slope side of the stockpile.
- **Construction Entrances** – Often an afterthought, all construction entrances/exits must be properly stabilized and maintained. Mud tracked to public roads during winter months is not only an E&S concern, but becomes an increased hazard to public safety.
- **Inlet Protection** – Upon the stabilization and proper control of upslope areas, inlet protection should be removed from storm sewer inlets within paved streets and parking lots during winter months.

(continued on page 7)

Borrow and Spoil Areas Associated with Sites that have NPDES Permits

This article is specifically targeted to those sites where there is not a balance of the cuts and fills. So, when a site does not balance what should you do? This topic is covered at all of my pre-construction meetings to avoid the occasional rogue fill pile that may pop up.

Assume that after the cut, you have an excess of 5000 yards of dirt that is being hauled off-site. My question to you would be: Is it going to a site that already has an NPDES permit or approved E&S plan? If that is the case, then you are fine, assuming that all of those controls have been implemented and are functioning properly. If you are not sure where the fill material is going at the time of the pre-construction meeting, you can call the conservation district when a site is picked out and verify if it is all right to bring it there.

What about those times when you export or import from an NPDES site and you do not have an E&S plan? E&S plan approval from the conservation district will need to be obtained. The placement or removal of the fill in question is treated as part of the NPDES permitted site from which it originated.

In closing, always be sure to perform environmental due diligence to assure that the fill that is imported or exported is clean fill. To avoid potential enforcement action, always make sure all fill is accounted for by taking it to a permitted site with an approved E&S plan.

*Kevin Boyle
Delaware County CD*



Straw mulch

Establishing straw mulch to reduce erosion and help aid in seed germination is recommended as a Best Management Practice (BMP) to implement on non-cropland disturbed soil.

Straw mulch protects the soil surface from the impact of rain drops, preventing soil particles from being dislodged. Straw mulch also aids in water penetration, conserves moisture by reducing the amount of water lost through evaporation. Straw mulch helps maintain uniform soil temperatures. It acts as an insulator keeping the soil warmer during cool weather and cooler during warmer months of the year.

The standard application rate for straw mulch is 140lbs/1000 sq.ft., 1240lbs/1000 sq.yds. or 3 tons/acre. i.e. (straw bale weighing 40.lbs equals 150 bales/acre.) Three inches thick is a considerable amount of straw mulch. These rates correspond to approximately a 3-inch-thick layer of mulch.

Most stabilization projects should be mulched immediately to minimize the potential for failure and to establish an adequate vegetative cover. All seeded areas should be mulched to provide a suitable environment for germination, and protect the seedling from intense sunlight.

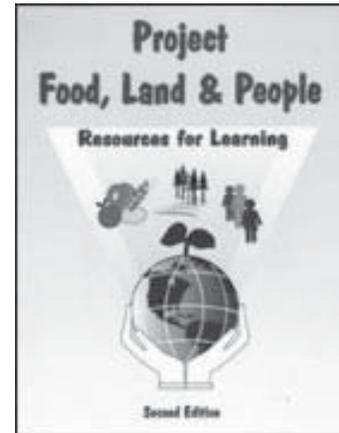
Straw mulch is derived from wheat, rice and barley. Native grasses can also be part of the straw mulch mix, if desired. Other mulches such as hay, woodchips, organic matter, and synthetic binders may be used in accordance with application rates and manufacturers' recommendations.

To prevent straw mulch from wind blow, straw should be incorporated into the soil with a studded roller, crimper, or by anchoring with a tackifier emulsion. Crimping and studded rolling are controls used on 3:1 slope. Tackifier is the preferred method for anchoring straw mulch. Tackifier acts to glue the straw fibers together, and to the soil surface. A tacking agent should be selected on the basis of longevity and the ability to hold the fiber. Asphalt, either emulsified or cut-back, and synthetic binders containing no agents toxic to plants or animal life can be applied at specified rates to anchor straw mulch. Erosion control blankets, lightweight plastic, fiber or paper nets may be stapled over the mulch to aid in anchoring. One note to consider before using netting for anchoring straw mulch is song birds and other wildlife as they may become tangled in the netting.

In conclusion, straw mulch is a sound conservation practice. For more information on this or other Best Management Practices contact your local County Conservation District

*Eric Wightman
Bucks County CD*

Project Food, Land and People



On November 6 and again on November 20 the Bucks County Conservation District (BCCD) educator joined forces with educators from Bucks County Audubon/Honey Hollow Environmental Center. With the ability to provide ACT 48 continuing education credits for teachers, BCCD was able to host a Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) workshop on Project Food, Land and People.

During the 6 -hour workshops, teachers had the opportunity to “test run” several of the nearly 100 interdisciplinary lesson plans supplied by PDE. Utilizing the format of a student-friendly game and using several manipulatives to symbolize water, land, trees and people, educators learned about carrying capacity and how it relates to available natural resources.

An additional lesson featured an easy to set up, do it yourself lab using recyclable material and demonstrated how no-till farming and contour plowing can reduce soil erosion and non-point pollution to our waterways.

Special thanks go out to Honey Hollow staff and to Pat Catucci from Berks County Conservation District, who joined us on November 20, to help facilitate this hands-on training for teachers.

BCCD hopes to continue to bring informative workshops to teachers so that they are more prepared to educate their students on important issues relating to soil and water resources.

*Mary Ellen Noonan
Bucks Co. CD*

**Today's problems cannot be solved if
we still think the way we thought
when we created them.**

– Albert Einstein

Concrete Washout: What is the problem?

Every year conservation district staff observe a contractor or concrete truck driver washing out a concrete truck and allowing the runoff to go directly into a storm drain. This is a violation of the PA Clean Streams Law and a violation of the conditions of the NPDES Permit for Construction Activities.

Concrete washout runoff is alkaline and contains high levels of chromium, which can leach into the ground and contaminate groundwater. The ph of concrete washout runoff is extremely high, somewhere around 13. The ph is so high that once it reaches a stream it will harm aquatic life. PADEP and PA Fish and Boat Commission have documented fish kills directly caused by washout water.

What are you, as the responsible site manager, to do? If your project is a large-scale project or one that will require significant cubic yards of concrete, you should consider a concrete washout facility.

There are several companies that offer sturdy, prefabricated concrete washout containers. Some of the companies even offer complete service that includes regular pickups of solid and liquid wastes. You can also build your own concrete washout facility. It is estimated that 7 gallons of wash water are used to wash a truck chute and 50 gallons to wash out the hopper.

Concrete washout water needs to be addressed for projects regardless of what type of a BMP is chosen. The site manager must take the responsibility for assuring that concrete drivers comply.

A fact sheet on Concrete Washout is available on EPA NPDES Web site: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps>.

Dan Greig
Chester County CD



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Report Shows using Low Impact Development Practices Reduces Costs

Designers involved in stormwater management may be interested in EPA's new report, "Reducing Stormwater Costs through Low Impact Development (LID) Strategies and Practices." The report contains 17 case studies from across North America that show using LID practices in construction projects can lower costs while improving environmental results.

LID practices are innovative stormwater management practices used to manage urban stormwater runoff at its source. The goal of LID practices is to mimic the way water moves through an area before development occurs, which is achieved using design techniques that infiltrate, evapotranspire, and reuse runoff close to its source.

Some common LID practices include rain gardens, grassed swales, cisterns, rain barrels, permeable pavements and green roofs. LID practices increasingly are used by communities across the country to help protect and restore water quality. For a copy of the report, go to www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/costs07.

Dan Greig
Chester County CD



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Why Infiltration is Special – A Tribute to Hindsight

Infiltration. It's not only when a Conservation District employee appears on site unannounced and incognito (Chester County uses fake beards and sunglasses), but also a relevant and effective practice of handling the stormwater produced by development. Back in the day, which really wasn't all too long ago, the approach to handling stormwater was get it away as quickly as possible, or an "out of sight, out of mind" approach. But as humans, we are destined to learn by trial and error. It seems we need to make mistakes to learn lessons.

Over the past several years, stormwater management has come a long way, with infiltration practices becoming a preferred and effective (and required where possible) best management practice.

Prior to development and removal of natural vegetation, a significant amount of stormwater percolates back into the grounds. Some of this water stored in the soil is evaporated back into the atmosphere, some feed the root systems of thirsty plants, while some feed and maintain flows of our streams year round. Development takes previously pervious areas and makes them impervious. Parking lots, buildings, roadways and sidewalks, and even just compaction of the soils can prevent this natural process from occurring.

This has several negative effects. For one, the runoff produced is discarded. In other words, the runoff is removed from the site as quickly as possible. But where does it go? Well, it is usually directed to the nearest water course, stream, or channel. Now, whereas some of this runoff would, in natural conditions, have been stored in the ground, this volume goes straight to the streams. This begins a compound chain of degradation of ecosystems and water quality within the streams.

As runoff leaves parking lots, roadways, and rooftops, it picks up many different kinds of pollutants. These pollutants are carried by the runoff through storm sewers or roadside swales, more often than not discharging directly to a watercourse. In addition, impervious areas retain heat, which also raises the temperature of the runoff. This "pollutant laden" runoff has terrible effects on the ecosystem of a stream. Many micro-invertebrates that support the food chain within a stream ecosystem cannot survive in warmer, polluted waters, thus having a drastic effect on the ecosystem itself.

In addition, quick removal of runoff inevitably results in an increase in volume and velocity of discharge into a stream. This, in turn, results in an increase in volume and velocity of the stream itself. Again comes the degradation domino effect. Natural stream channels are not able to withstand the increase volume and velocity associated with a developed watershed. Consequences range from further degradation of the stream itself from scouring, and headcutting, to compounded flooding issues further down the watershed. Flooding has become a major problem in the southeast PA region, resulting in millions of dollars in economic losses and property damage.

Another consequence to soils no longer having the ability to infiltrate is preventing groundwater recharge. If underground aquifers

are denied the ability to replenish themselves through groundwater recharge, streams can become nothing more than dirty, dry ditches during the hotter summer months.

Is this intended to speculate that development is bad? Never! Development is inevitable, otherwise people would still be rubbing sticks together to build fire and drawing art on the walls of caves. We just need to develop smarter. Is infiltration the solution to all our stormwater woes? No, it is impossible to reverse over a hundred years of poor stormwater management. But we can retrofit, where possible, and do our best to minimize the effects of future development. The need to manage stormwater is most efficiently accommodated by mimicking natural hydrologic conditions. The key to proper stormwater management is duplicating as best possible what happens to rain when it first hits the earth prior to development and how it is handled following construction.

Properly designed and implemented infiltration facilities can help us duplicate the natural processes. Infiltration facilities come in all different shapes and sizes and designs, from pervious paving, to trenches, to underground basins. So, the "out of sight, out of mind" approach is still relevant, just with a twist. What suits your site?

*Benjamin Drover
Chester County*

Soil Profile



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NPDES Co-Permittee Form

NPDES requirements clearly states that any party that is responsible for the day-to-day operation, implementation, or maintenance of erosion and sedimentation BMP's be added as a co-permittee. The Project Owner is able to limit his or her liability toward potential fines and penalties should the contractor fail to conduct operations in compliance with the permitted plans.

On page three of the co-permittee forms there is a statement that says one should attach an additional sheet that describes which responsibilities and which areas of the project the co-permittee is held accountable. This is important when the co-permittee has only partial responsibility for the site and is on site for only a portion of the project; then it is clear what work needs to be complete before they can get off the permit. When a co-permittee with partial responsibility has fulfilled obligations, they should file a Notice of Termination (NOT) form with the local Conservation District. On this form the box "I/we am/are no longer the Owner(s) or Operator(s) of the Construction Activity" should be checked. This will not terminate the NPDES permit; it will just allow the one party to withdraw. The original permittee is also required to sign the NOT form to verify that that they agree that the co-permittee has satisfactorily completed its responsibilities.

If the co-permittee has finished their part of the job and the Notice of Termination form is not received, it is assumed they still maintain their original level of responsibility. Violations that occur could still be attributed to them. It is also important to remember that if a site was issued a Notice of Violation, no parties can be removed from the permit until those violations are cleared.

Although simple to complete, this form can make a big difference if complications arise later in the job and make resolution easier on all parties involved. The co-permittee and notice of termination forms are usually included in the permit package when the NPDES permit is issued. They can also be found at <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgmt/wc/Subjects/StormwaterManagement/GeneralPermits/default.htm>

*Michelle Ferri
Delaware County CD*

If we learn, finally, that what we need to "manage" is not the land so much as ourselves in the land, we will have turned the history of American land-use on its head.

- Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day

Envirothon measures students' environmental knowledge

Plans are already underway for the 2008 County Envirothon in each of the southeast region's Conservation Districts. In addition to the regular testing stations (Aquatics, Forestry, Soils and Wildlife) this year's topic is Recreation Impacts to the Environment

The Canon Envirothon (www.envirothon.org) is an exciting and fun way for high school students throughout North America to learn about the environment and issues facing this and future generations.

Sponsored in partnership with the National Association of Conservation Districts, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other conservation agencies, the competition began in Pennsylvania in 1979. In 2006, more than 500,000 teenagers from 50 states, eight provinces and one territory participated in this yearly event.

In addition to NACD, U.S. Forest Service and EPA, a number of partners will be participating either with study sessions given before the event or working a station the day of the event, including, PA Fish and Boat, NRCS, Pa Game Commission, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and Heritage Conservancy.

Dates of County Envirothons

Bucks County Envirothon - April 24 at Tyler State Park

Chester County Envirothon - Hibernia County Park

SR/MS Day – Thursday April 24

E-1 Grades 1-3 – Tuesday, April 29

E-2 Grades 4-5 – Wednesday, April 30

Delaware County Envirothon - April 29, Ridley Creek State Park.

Montgomery County Envirothon - April 29 - May 1, 2008 at Lower Perkiomen Valley Park



Through the "Trout in the Classroom" program, students release raised trout into the Honey Hollow watershed at the 2007 Envirothon in Bucks County.



Fish and Boat Waterways Conservation Officers Moyer and Dunbar grade test at the aquatics station.

Chester County Engineers Association

A new organization for the engineering community has been formed in Chester County. The Chester County Engineers Association (CEE) is a trade group made up primarily of engineers that do land development in Chester and Delaware counties.

The CCE is a locally-based non-profit trade association dedicated to advancing the Civil Engineering profession in Chester Co by:

- Promoting professional standards and acknowledging local excellence
- Advancing civil engineering knowledge with special educational opportunities
- Offering unique peer-to-peer networking opportunities
- Improving the regulatory climate by monitoring and engaging local review agencies.

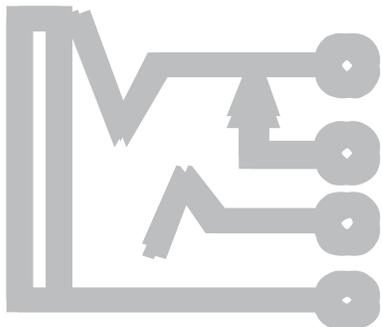
The first official meeting of the association was held in January 2008 at the Chester County Economic Development Council office in Lionville PA. Approximately 60 people attended. The meeting featured Domenic Rocco of the Southeast Regional Office of PADEP and Dan Greig, Chester County Conservation District Manager. Domenic and Dan sat in front of the group and attempted to answer questions in regards to Stormwater and other programs.

Items covered included:

- PA Stormwater Best Management Practice Manual
- Post Construction Stormwater Plans
- New NPDES Permit Applications
- Act 537 approvals and the NPDES Program
- Conservation District Fees for Services
- Off-site Stormwater Discharges and easements

The Conservation District is encouraged with the formation of this association. CCCD views this organization as a partner working to provide the tools necessary to protect the natural resources of Chester County and the Commonwealth. For additional information on the CCE and how to join, please visit the website at <http://www.chestercountyengineers.org>.

*Dan Greig
Chester County CD*



BCCD Annual Dinner

On November 8, the Bucks County Conservation District held their annual dinner meeting at The Wagon Wheel Restaurant in Doylestown. The staff and board of directors of the Conservation District were joined by area partners such as the Farm Bureau and NRCS as well as family and friends to celebrate the district's 46th year. In addition to a wonderful meal, on the agenda for the evening were several topics. A short overview of the many district programs was given, including a focus on the Rain Garden grant project.

The award for the Farm Family of 2007 was presented to Richard and Randy Labs. Returning for a visit from her new assignment in Lancaster County, Marcia Farbotnick (who nominated the Labs) joined Jeff Garton in honoring the Labs and bestowing upon them not only commendations from both the County Commissioners and Senator McIlhinney, but also a framed aerial photograph of their Bedminster farm. Finally a raffle of prizes donated by area businesses closed the evening.

*Mary Ellen Noonan
Bucks County CD*



Jeffrey Garton, Marcia Farbotnick, Randy and Richard Labs



BCCD Staff: (l-r) Eric Wightman, Rich Krasselt, Camille Peters, Mike Hunter, Courtney O'Neill, Mary Ellen Noonan, Sandy Tucker and Rene Moyer. Missing from the photo are Gretchen Schatschneider, Alberta Jett and Lisa Ishimuro.

General Winter Site Maintenance

(continued from front page)

- **Sediment Basin/Trap Maintenance** – One of the most important maintenance items for basins and traps during winter months is the outlet structure. Checking that all seals retain their watertight seal is crucial. For basin with Faircloth skimmers, log on to www.fairclothskimmer.com for tips on winter icing remedies. Maintenance inspections should also address: signs of basin failure, monitoring sedimentation, removal of debris from outlet and basin, and making sure the spillway is clear.
- **Self Inspections** – The most effective maintenance tool an owner/operator can employ is the completion of weekly self inspections and after runoff rain events. Not only is it a stipulation of the NPDES permit, but it goes a long way to keeping a clean site by diagnosing a problem or potential problem and dealing with it before an inspection by a Conservation District representative notes site violations.

In closing, nothing is foolproof and there are no guarantees, but utilizing the above measures, being proactive, practicing preventative maintenance, and using common sense will help owner/operators in dealing with Old Man Winter and your friendly neighborhood conservation district.

*Jim Demchak
Chester Co. CD*

Whenever man comes up with a better mousetrap, nature immediately comes up with a better mouse.

– James Carswell

Staff changes at BCCD

It was a gloomy fall day indeed when the staff of BCCD gathered for the final team building experience with our Coastal Zone Technician **Courtney O’Neill**. Courtney filled the coastal zone position and was responsible for reviewing and inspecting many of Bucks County’s most active townships. Everyone will miss Courtney’s smile and sunny disposition, but we all wish her well in her new adventures in Maine.

We are pleased to introduce our newest employee, **Jake Borden**. Jake was born and raised in Doylestown and graduated from West Virginia University in 2006 with a BA in Forestry and a focus on Parks and Recreation. Before coming to the Bucks County Conservation District as the new Coastal Non-Point Pollution Specialist, he worked for Del Val Soils & Environmental Consultants conducting soil testing. Having a passion for the great outdoors and a love for Bucks County, he looks forward to this new and exciting opportunity. Please welcome him aboard. He can be contacted at (215) 345-7577.x105 or Jakeborden@bucksccd.org.

*Mary Ellen Noonan
Bucks County CD*

Award Nominations Sought

The Bucks County Conservation District (BCCD) is now accepting nominations for its 2008 awards competition.

This annual program recognizes residents of Bucks County for outstanding conservation efforts in several categories. Winners will receive letters of commendation from the county commissioners and be presented with award plaques at a commissioner’s meeting.

The award categories are:

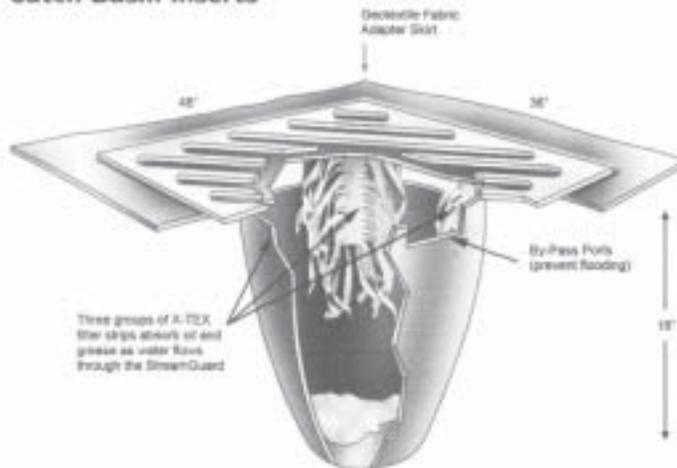
- Conservation Individual of the Year
- Conservation Educator of the Year
- Conservation Organization of the Year
- Conservation Farmer of the Year
- Elected Official Recognition Award
- Forest Conservation Award
- Farmland Preservation named in honor of George M. Bush
- Resource Conservation Management Award
- Urban Conservation Award

Added this year is a new award:

- Conservation High School Student of the Year

More information and nomination forms are available on the BCCD website at www.bucksccd.org or by contacting the district office at 215 345 7577 ext 101. Submit nominations to BCCD, 1456 Ferry Road, Suite 704, Doylestown, PA 18901 by February 15, 2008.

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CONSERVATION & YOU is published by the Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery County Conservation Districts in cooperation with the PaDEP, Bureau of Waterways, Wetlands and Erosion Control. For advertising information, call (610)892-9484.

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