



## Tips for Controlling Sediment at Construction Sites

Eroded soil at construction sites can pollute rivers, streams and lakes via stormwater runoff. One way to help keep this pollution to a minimum is by implementing sediment control structural best management practices.

The following best management practices (BMPs) are from *Blueprint for a Clean Ocean*, a brochure on preventing stormwater pollution from construction-related activities, courtesy of the Public Works department of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, California.

Sedimentation is defined as the process of depositing sediments picked up by runoff. Sediments consist of soil particles, clays, sands and other minerals. The purpose of sediment control practices is to remove sediments from stormwater before they are transported off-site or reach a storm drain inlet or nearby creek. The most effective sediment control practices reduce runoff velocity and trap or detain runoff, allowing sediments to settle out.

- Use terracing, rip rap, sandbags, rocks, straw bales and/or temporary vegetation on slopes to reduce runoff velocity and trap sediments. Do not use asphalt, rubble or other demolition debris for this purpose.
- Use check dams in temporary drains and swales to reduce runoff velocity and promote sedimentation.
- Protect storm drain inlets from sediment-laden runoff. Storm drain inlet protection devices include sandbag barriers, filter fabric fences, block and gravel filters and excavated drop inlet sediment traps.
- Collect and detain sediment-laden runoff in sediment traps (an excavated or bermed area or constructed device) to allow sediments to settle out prior to discharge.
- Use sediment controls and filtration to remove sediments from water generated by dewatering.
- Prevent construction vehicle tires from tracking soil onto adjacent streets by constructing a temporary gravel pad with a filter fabric underliner near the site exit where dirt and mud can be removed.
- When cleaning sediments from streets, driveways and paved areas on construction sites use dry sweeping methods where possible. If water must be used to flush pavement, collect runoff to settle out sediments and protect storm drain inlets.

Note: Performance of sediment controls is dependent on proper installation, routine inspections and maintenance of the controls. Most of the BMPs described above are temporary and if left alone, can quickly fall into disrepair and/or become ineffective. Routine inspections and maintenance, particularly before and after a storm event, must be part of an erosion and sediment control plan.