

## **Construction Site Sediment Runoff**

Sediment that gets caught up in storm water runoff is the biggest pollutant associated with construction sites. When left uncontrolled sediment laden runoff from construction sites significantly impacts our drainages, ditches, pipes, creeks, rivers, lakes and estuaries. Once there sediments cause numerous negative impacts to the natural ecological order. Because of the potential for significant impacts, construction sites that disturb one acre or more of land are required to apply for and be issued a Notice of Coverage (NOC) from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) prior to beginning work.

The goals of construction site storm water runoff control:

- Reduce pollutants and sediments in storm water runoff from construction activities disturbing one or more acres of land surface and those activities less than one acre that are part of a larger common plan of development.
- Provide procedures for public input, sanctions to ensure compliance, requirements for construction managers to implement appropriate erosion and sediment control practices, review of site plans which incorporates consideration of potential water quality impacts, and procedures for site inspection and enforcement of control measures.
- Establish requirements for construction managers to control waste such as discarded building materials, concrete truck washout, chemicals, litter, and sanitary waste.

Construction storm water runoff control:

- The permitting process requires the submission of a Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that the contractor will use to control site runoff. The plan includes Best Management Practices (BMPs) that the contractor plans to utilize for containing all disturbed soil on site. The goal of the plan is to keep the sediment on site while allowing the storm water to leave.
- Plan reviews are conducted to ensure they provide for adequate construction and post-construction storm water runoff pollution control.
- Pre-construction meetings help to identify potential storm water runoff problem areas on the construction site and ensure they are addressed as part of the SWPPP.
- During construction, the contractor is required to inspect the BMPs they use to prevent sediment laden water from leaving the construction site. The BMPs are also inspected by local construction inspectors and TDEC inspectors on a less frequent basis. All inspections are aimed at ensuring the BMPs will function properly when they are needed.
- TDEC regulations and the City of Paris Storm water Management Ordinance provides for enforcement of storm water requirements at construction sites when the BMPs of the contractor prove to be ineffective. However, the goal of enforcement action is not so much as to punish as to correct the deficiencies to prevent any future violations.
- By working with developers, contractors and builders to ensure effective BMPs are in place, we all are helping to reduce or eliminate storm water runoff pollution and to maintain our water quality.