2020 ISSUE

HERE'S THE DIRT

STORMWATER COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT · ENGINEERING SERVICES DIVISION

INSIDE THE 2020 ISSUE

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & COMPLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

WATERSHED PROTECTION

A watershed is an area of land that drains all the waterways, as well as stormwater, to a common outlet. Our community is a part of the Savannah River Basin which is made up of various tributaries such as Kiokee Creek, Euchee Creek, Betty's Branch, Jones Creek, and Reed Creek. Our community is connected to these tributaries through the storm system. During rain events, excess water that can't soak down into the ground travels on impervious surfaces. The water acts like a taxi service picking up pollutants like oil, dog waste, grass clippings, and even sediment along the way. The water flows into our community storm system and into the nearest waterway bringing all those pollutants with it.

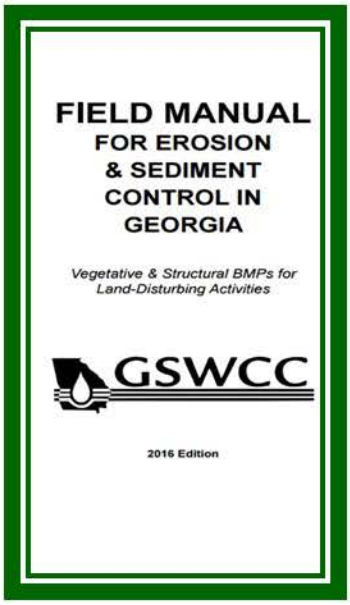
With all the growth happening in Columbia County, it is important to understand how land disturbance for commercial and residential developments impact our watershed. Sediment is considered a pollutant when stormwater runoff transports it from construction sites to our watershed. It can block sunlight, decrease visibility, and lower oxygen levels in aquatic habitats preventing organisms from reproducing and thriving. Sedimentation accelerated by unmanaged land disturbances can also impact our community by causing floodplain shifts, more localized flooding, property damage, decrease in property values, and generally degrading the water quality of our watershed which is our drinking water source.

As part of the construction community, you can help manage the stormwater runoff of sediment on your sites through best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs not only need to be installed correctly but maintained throughout the duration of your project. The Columbia County Erosion & Sediment Control Team are actively inspecting sites daily to ensure compliance. Please join us in protecting our watershed for the sake of our community and the generations to come.

Formerly Published as *The Enviro-Source*

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT INSPECTIONS

How soon can I get an inspection? Inspection requests received by 4:30pm will be scheduled for the following business day unless you specify a later date.



How do I schedule an NOT inspection? NOT inspections are scheduled by emailing LDP@columbiacountyga.gov. If the project had an NOI, provide the County a copy of the NOT form submitted online in EPD's system, GEOS.

My lot didn't require an NOI. Do I still need an NOT inspection? Yes! Permit requirements and inspection requirements are two separate categories. Though the NOI permit was not required, E&S inspectors still need to visit the site to determine that stabilization best management practices have been followed (e.g., silt fence removal, permanent seeding and mulch, etc.).

Do pine straw or mulch beds count as permanent stabilization? No. Pine straw and mulch are considered temporary stabilization and therefore require trees, shrubs, or perennial vines planted throughout. Please see the Green Book's Table 6-5.3 for ground cover recommendations. This table also includes guidance on plant spacing, coloration, and water and sunlight needs.

HOW DO YOU FIND THE GREEN BOOK ONLINE?

Follow these steps:

Go to:

https://gaswcc.georgia.gov/

⇩

Click on Documents List

⇩

Search For:

Field Manual for Erosion & Sediment Control in Georgia 2016 Edition

OR

Manual for Erosion & Sediment Control in Georgia 2016 Edition

NOTICE OF TERMINATION (NOT) REQUIREMENTS By Wheeler Cowart

According to the 2016 Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia (Green Book), final stabilization means all soil disturbing activities have been completed, and, for unpaved areas not covered by permanent structures, 100% of the soil surface is uniformly covered in permanent vegetation with a density of at least 70%, or the site has been landscaped according to the approved landscape plan.

In addition to stabilization, drainage is a major component of a final inspection. Projects must be developed with positive drainage so as to allow water to exit without causing impact to adjacent properties or waterways. Examples of methods to accomplish proper drainage are berms, swales, yard drains, as well as various filters for water quality. Many projects have drainage plans submitted to Columbia County as part of the permit package, however, any questions may be directed to the Stormwater Compliance office at 706-447-SOIL [7645].

7-DAY INSPECTION: WHO SHOULD BE PRESENT?

Sites with NPDES ES&PC Plans are required to have the plan preparer, the "design professional," perform an inspection of the initial sediment storage requirements and perimeter control BMPs within 7 days after installation. We strongly recommend this inspection be coordinated with the E&S inspector and grading contractor. Failure to properly conduct the 7-day initial inspection is a permit violation and could result in fee accrual.

CONCRETE WASHOUT

Concrete is a necessary building material in our community. We use it to build the roads, businesses, and homes. After concrete is poured, all equipment and tools are washed down before the concrete hardens. Concrete, as well the wash water, can be very destructive to our environment if not managed properly; therefore, concrete washouts are required for all construction projects in Columbia County. Concrete washout can be found in Article III, Section 34-69, Part E of Columbia County's Code of Ordinances and it states:

> *'Construction waste. Wastes such as discarded construction materials, concrete truck washout, chemicals, litter, sanitary waste, and any other similar material which may cause adverse water quality impact must be controlled at the construction site, and transported to an appropriate disposal facility for such waste. On-site burial of such wastes is not allowed.'*

One of the main ingredients in concrete is called cement. Cement has multiple components, including lime and oxidized metals. These materials can be toxic to humans, as well as aquatic life. If not controlled on site, the concrete wash water can increase pH of the water in aquatic ecosystems, change soil chemistry, inhibit plant growth, contaminate groundwater, and effect the general water quality in our local waterways, which is our drinking water source.

Developers: Your role is to install and maintain the concrete washouts on each of your project sites. Concrete washouts should not be installed within 50 feet of a storm drain, open ditch, or waterbody. Gravel approaches should be installed leading up to every concrete washout location. Each washout location should be inspected daily and after heavy rains events and maintained accordingly. Share with your builders/contractors the locations of each concrete washout on site and how to request maintenance on a washout.

Builders/Contractors: Your role is to know the location of concrete washouts on your project sites and ensure that your team uses them properly. All equipment and/or tools used during concrete activities should only be washed off in the designated concrete washout locations. Communicate with your developer when concrete washouts are in need of maintenance.

KEEP THE FISH ABUNDANT.

WE'RE IN!

ARE YOU?

Storm drains are ***directly*** connected to our water resources. These storm drains are designed to capture and manage runoff during rain events. Sweeping grass clippings, leaves, dirt, or other debris into the road and storm drain is not acceptable because:

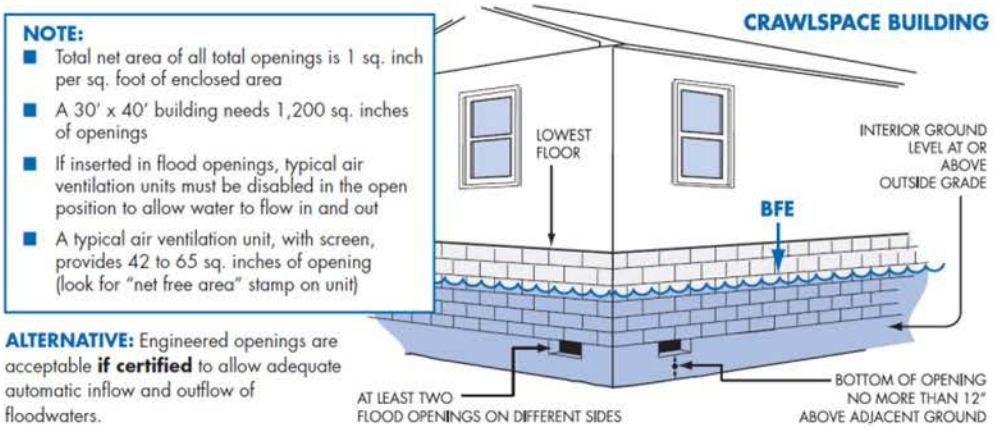
- Debris can clog storm systems which may cause flooding.
- Pollutants in our waters degrade aquatic life and recreational resources.

WHAT EACH INDIVIDUAL DOES ADDS UP AND MAKES AN IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITY.

ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN!

FEMA FOCUS: CRAWLSPACES & FLOOD VENTS

Solid perimeter wall foundations can enclose flood-prone space. A crawlspace is a good way to elevate just a couple of feet. In all cases, the following are required: flood vents/openings, elevated utilizes, flood-resistant materials, and limitations on use.



Additional information about flood openings is available in FEMA's Technical Bulletin 1: Openings in Foundation Walls and Walls of Enclosures: **https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_tb1_openings_foundation_walls_walls_of_enclosures_031320.pdf**

MEET THE STORMWATER COMPLIANCE TEAM

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