

WINTER STABILIZATION

Contractors please be aware of the Soil Conservation District's Winter Compliance standards. Between November 15th and March 1st the soil conservation District will be issuing winter compliances for projects that do not meet the required germination rates for a given project. A project will only receive a final report of compliance once the standards are fulfilled. The requirement of permanent stabilization states: establishing permanent vegetation with 80% vegetative cover (of the seeded species) and mowed once.

MAINTENANCE

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 to meet the approved E&S standards. When using straw mulch, an anchoring product such as tackifier or crimper 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 or a hydro-mulch 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 onto roadways during winter months is not only an E&S concern, but becomes an increased hazard to public safety.

Inlet Protection – Inlet protection must be properly maintained on all storm sewer inlets through the duration of the winter months.

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. 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.