

STORMWATER COMPLIANCE INSPECTION FACT SHEET NURSERIES

County of Sacramento Environmental management Department

As mandated by State requirements, County of Sacramento Environmental Management Department (EMD) is implementing a stormwater compliance program on behalf of the County and the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Galt, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento, as of July 1, 2004. **This program includes triennial stormwater compliance inspections at facilities within specified industrial and commercial categories, including nurseries.**

Sediment, compost, manure, and chemicals, are among nursery industry pollutants that may impact the storm drainage system and local waterways. When these pollutants enter the storm drainage system (includes storm drains, roadside drainage ditches, street gutters, drainage channels, and natural water ways), they flow directly into our local waters with no treatment for pollutant removal. These pollutants degrade water quality and harm aquatic life. Sediment can also block or damage underground pipes.

Facility operators must prevent prohibited discharges to the storm drainage system and implement measures to reduce pollutant sources associated with their activities.

In General

When an inspector from the County of Sacramento Environmental Management Dept. arrives to inspect your nursery for stormwater compliance, he/she will be primarily concerned with the following:

- Are chemicals, hazardous wastes, etc. being managed and stored properly?
- Are spilled and leaking materials such as chemicals, waste oil, fertilizers, etc. being cleaned up and disposed of properly, and in a timely manner?
- Are reasonable erosion and sediment control measures (BMPs) in place to reduce the amount of sediment that will get washed from the facility into County drainage and local waters by irrigation and rainfall?

BMPs

Best management practices (BMPs) are measures that are taken to prevent, control, or treat pollutant sources. Sediment and sediment-related materials such as potting soil, compost, and steer manure are likely stormwater pollutants at nurseries that must be controlled. The goal should be to stabilize soils and materials to prevent them from washing off-site.

Below are listed some common BMP suggestions for controlling sediment and other common nursery pollutants:

Stabilization of areas that are vulnerable to erosion

- Stabilize unpaved, disturbed areas and slopes that are likely to lose sediment to rainfall contact and/or irrigation runoff with materials such as gravel, hydro-mulch, straw (preferably tackified), wood chips, or vegetation.

- Stabilize access points from unpaved areas to streets with paving or 1” or larger rock to help prevent sediment track-out by vehicular traffic. Stabilized area should extend back at least 50’ from the street and be monitored for effectiveness and to prevent rock migration into the street.

Protect stockpiled materials

- Piled potting soil, manure, amendments, etc. should be covered with fastened or weighted tarps during wet season (Oct. 1 – April 30) to prevent stormwater contact, and/or surrounded with perimeter protection measures such as staked fiber rolls or silt fences to help capture material that gets washed from the pile.
- Place piled materials on higher ground and away from drainage courses and try to avoid over-irrigation of stockpiles for dust control, that results in runoff.

Sediment control measures to help capture fugitive sediment

- Install and maintain sediment filters in on-site storm drains.
- Install staked fiber rolls at areas such as at the base of slopes and other places where stormwater and irrigation discharges sheet flow into on-site drainage courses.
- Protect banks of drainage courses in areas that are especially vulnerable to erosion with coco blankets and similar measures, or construct spillways.
- Install filtration media such as staked fiber rolls or clean gravel berms perpendicular to the direction of flow in shallow on-site drainage courses, and/or vegetate drainage courses.

Other useful measures

- Prevent over-irrigation and monitor dust suppression activities to reduce runoff.
- Implement an aggressive spill response policy and train employees to the policy to ensure that spills involving fertilizers, chemicals, fuel, oil, and other materials are cleaned promptly and are properly disposed of.

Stormwater Ordinances

Pollutant discharges to the storm drainage system and local waters is prohibited by your County or City stormwater ordinance. You are also required by your stormwater ordinance to prevent future, potential pollutant discharges by implementing and maintaining appropriate best management practices (BMPs) for likely pollutant sources at your business. The County’s stormwater ordinance is Chapter 15.12 of the County Code.

More Information / Compliance Assistance

- Contact your stormwater compliance inspector or any available stormwater inspector by calling **(916) 875-8400** if you have any questions
- Contact the Business Environmental Resource Center at **(916) 364-4110** for free and confidential compliance assistance
- See EMDs Department website at <http://www.emd.saccounty.net>