

Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control (SESC) Policy

What is Soil Erosion and Sedimentation?

Erosion is the process when soil particles get swept away by wind or rain and sedimentation is the buildup of soil particles in a river or stream.

Why is erosion and sedimentation control important?

Sediment is the greatest pollutant by volume entering our lakes and streams. While soil erosion and sedimentation occur naturally, caused by wind and rain, human activities such as construction and other development (changing the landscape from forest to residential yards, streets, shopping centers and roads activities) can accelerate the process by up to 2,000 times. Soil erosion may result in the following:

- Loss of land mass, thus reducing the property value of homes and parcels.
- Increased flooding due to the reduction of stream channel or storm drain capacity.
- Structural damage to buildings and roads.
- Reduced oxygen levels in lakes and streams, which can become detrimental to aquatic life.
- Reduced aquatic habitat for bottom-dwelling plants and animals.
- Soil can carry pollutants, such as fertilizers, oils and greases, etc. to our waterways.
- Erosion costs local governments millions of dollars a year, due to maintenance and inspection expenditures, which increases property and municipal taxes.

Why do I need a SESC Permit?

The Environmental, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) requires soil erosion and sedimentation control (SESC) measures to take place for any earth change activity which disturbs one or more acres of land or which is within 500 feet of a lake or stream (Part 91). Part 91, Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) provides for the control of soil erosion and protects adjacent properties and the waters of the state from sedimentation. Per Part 91, a soil erosion permit is required for all new construction projects within the City of Birmingham that meet the criteria for coverage. EGLE's Water Resource Division (WRD) has oversight responsibility over the statewide SESC Program and all Part 91 agencies.

The City of Birmingham is considered a Part 91 agency and is responsible for enforcing Part 91 within the City limits. Below are the procedures all permittees will have to follow.

The following are required on the plans:

- Location map
- Legal Description
- Proximity to water source
- Soil types
- Limits of disturbance
- Sequence: Timing of construction
- SESC measurements and details

SESC Procedures

Pre-Construction

- Applicant shall obtain and fill out the City of Birmingham's SESC Permit Application at City Hall and provide the City with three (3) hard copies of the proposed SESC plans.
- Within ten (10) business days of applicant submittal, the plans will be reviewed for SESC City and State compliance measures. The Applicant will be contacted with any necessary changes to the proposed plans, and a resubmittal of the updated plans for review will be requested.
- Upon approval of the plans, the City will issue the permit and the permit and approved plans will be stamped and signed by a City representative for final approval.
- The City will distribute the signed and stamped SESC plans and issued permit to the Applicant. At this time construction work can begin.

During Construction

- The Permit Holder is responsible for directly contacting the City to schedule the initial inspection. All SESC measures should be installed before any earth change.
- The SESC measures will be inspected by the City or Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc. (HRC) upon installation, monthly and after any significant rain events (greater than ½-inch of rainfall) to ensure the measures and sites are compliant. HRC has been contracted by the City to perform the SESC inspections.
- If any of the SESC measures are not compliant or if there is any significant sediment tracking into the street, the City or HRC will directly notify the Permit Holder of these issues. The Permit Holder has one (1) week to correct these issues; the City or HRC will check the site after one (1) week.
- If these corrections have not been made or are not close to being resolved within the one (1) week period, HRC will contact the City to issue and post a Stop Inspection Notice (SIN).
- If the issues still have not been corrected after two (2) working days of the SIN being posted, HRC shall contact the City to immediately issue a Stop Work Order (SWO). At this point all City inspectors will watch for and document any work happening at this permits' site.
- When a site makes all requested corrections, the Permit Holder shall notify the City and HRC so the site can be re-inspected and the Stop Work Order lifted.

Post Construction

- The City or HRC will stop inspections and close the SESC permit once the site is 90% stabilized with vegetation and all SESC control measures have been removed from the site.

Frequently Asked Questions

What information is required in the permit application and plan?

Refer to the permit application packet for permit application and plan requirements. The requirements are dependent upon site characteristics such as: the topography or slope of the site, the distance to the nearest lake, pond, stream or conservation easement and the type of construction activity taking place.

NOTE: If any dewatering procedures are planned, make sure you make note of this on your permit application and plan; you will also need to specify how and where the water will be transported.

Who do I contact if I have any questions regarding these requirements, or any additional information?

Please contact City of Birmingham's Building Department/Community Development number at (248) 530-1850.