

Chapter 1 Introduction, Background, Purpose and Administration

1.1 Introduction

Upon passage of the Southern Lowcountry Stormwater Ordinance as amended and adopted by <local jurisdiction>, participating municipalities/jurisdictions reference the *Southern Lowcountry Stormwater Design Manual*. The Ordinance directs residents, land developers, redevelopment and government permit applicants to submit details and plans that comply with this design manual. The following sections and appendices provide the directions and details necessary to receive Southern Lowcountry jurisdictions' review and approval for project permits.

This Manual and the design criteria presented within represent good engineering practice and should be used in the preparation of stormwater management plans. The criteria are intended to establish requirements, minimum standards, and methods for sound planning, design, and review process. It is intended to guide the stormwater design review of proposed work done by developers, private parties and governmental agencies.

1.2 Background

EPA recommends that the Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit require the permittee to adopt a planning process that identifies the municipality's program goals (e.g., minimize water quality impacts resulting from post-construction runoff from new development and redevelopment), implementation strategies (e.g., adopt a combination of structural and/or non-structural BMPs), operation and maintenance policies and procedures, and enforcement procedures. In developing the program, EPA states that the permit should also require the permittee to assess existing ordinances, policies, programs and studies that address stormwater runoff quality. These policy assessments should include the following:

- policies and ordinances that
 - provide requirements and standards to direct growth to identified areas,
 - protect sensitive areas such as wetlands and riparian areas,
 - maintain and/or increase open space (including a dedicated funding source for open space acquisition),
 - provide buffers along sensitive water bodies,
 - minimize impervious surfaces, and
 - minimize disturbance of soils and vegetation;
- policies or ordinances that encourage infill development in higher density urban areas, and areas with existing infrastructure;
- education programs for developers and the public about project designs that minimize water quality impacts; and
- measures such as minimization of percent impervious area after development and minimization of directly connected impervious areas (81 Federal Register 237).

1.3 Purpose

This Manual's purpose is to provide a framework for designing a stormwater management system to:

- Improve water quality through runoff reduction to the maximum extent practicable (MEP);

- Prevent downstream stream bank and channel erosion;
- Reduce downstream overbank flooding; and
- Safely pass or reduce the runoff from extreme storm events.

This Manual presents a unified approach for sizing stormwater best management practices (BMPs) in the Southern Lowcountry to meet pollutant removal goals, reduce peak discharges, and pass extreme floods. And it follows a watershed approach for their size and specification. Based on the site's watershed, stormwater design criteria specific to each must be met for development permit approval.

1.4 Applicability and Exemptions

1.4.1 Applicability

Design criteria in this Manual are applicable to any new development or redevelopment activity that meets one or more of the following criteria, or is a major substantial improvement, unless exempt pursuant to Section 1.4.2 below:

1. New development that involves the creation of 5,000 square feet of impervious surface or that involves other land disturbing activities of one acre or more.
2. Redevelopment that involves the creation, addition or replacement of 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface or that involves other land disturbing activities of one acre or more.
3. New development or redevelopment, regardless of size, that is part of a larger common plan of development, even though multiple, separate and distinct land disturbing activities may take place at different times and on different schedules.
4. A major substantial improvement of an existing property, which is defined as a renovation or addition to a structure that meets both of the following cost and size thresholds: a) construction costs for the building renovation/addition are greater than or equal to 50% of the pre-project assessed value of the structure as developed using current Building Valuation Data of the International Code Council, and b) project size where the combined footprint of structure(s) exceeding the cost threshold and any land disturbance is greater than or equal to 5,000 square feet.

The design criteria are applicable for infill development of platted lots, whether they are new development or redevelopment sites if the work involves creation, addition or replacement of 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface or that involves other land disturbing activities of one acre or more.

1.4.2 Exemptions

The following activities are exempt from the permitting requirements of this Manual:

1. Any maintenance, alteration, renewal, or improvement as approved by *<local jurisdiction>* which does not alter existing drainage pattern, does not result in change or adverse impact on adjacent property, or create adverse environmental or water quality impacts, and does not increase the temperature, rate, quality, or volume or location of stormwater runoff discharge.
2. Projects that are exclusively for agricultural or silvicultural activities within areas zoned for these agricultural and silvicultural uses;
3. Agricultural activity not involving relocation of drainage canals;
4. Redevelopment that constitutes the replacement of the original square footage of impervious cover and original acreage of other land development activity when the original development is

wholly or partially lost due to natural disaster or other acts of God occurring after <date of adoption>; and,

5. Work by agencies or property owners required to mitigate emergency flooding conditions. If possible, emergency work should be approved by the duly appointed officials in charge of emergency preparedness or emergency relief. Property owners performing emergency work will be responsible for any damage or injury to persons or property caused by their unauthorized actions. Property owners will stabilize the site of the emergency work within 60 days, or as soon as reasonable, following the end of the emergency period.

1.5 Administration

1.5.1 Approval Requirements

Before the <local jurisdiction> may issue a stormwater permit for any project requiring stormwater management, the <local jurisdiction> must approve a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) meeting the requirements of the Southern Lowcountry Stormwater Ordinance and receive all fees required by the <local jurisdiction> for site and building development plans.

A complete SWMP submittal includes a completed engineer's certification statement, a submittal checklist, plans and design that are signed and sealed by a registered professional engineer licensed in South Carolina. Erosion and sediment control for sites below the SCDHEC NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities (SCR100000) thresholds must obtain permit coverage under this stormwater permit. All construction stormwater permit applications above the SCDHEC thresholds are reviewed by DHEC Office of Coastal Resources Management or the reviews are delegated to the <local jurisdiction> to determine compliance with the requirements of SCDHEC's NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities (SCR100000) and of the Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (C-SWPPP). These permit applications must be approved, issued, and provided to <local jurisdiction> prior to the issuance of the stormwater management plan approval.

1.5.2 Fees

An applicant is responsible for paying fees that provide for the cost of review, administration, and management of the stormwater permitting process and inspection of all projects subject to the requirements of <the local jurisdiction>. These fees are posted by the <local jurisdiction>.