

# Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)

## NPDES/SDS Construction Stormwater Permit Requirements

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**T**his factsheet provides guidance on writing an adequate stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) that will assist in keeping a construction site in compliance with the NPDES/SDS construction stormwater permit. The development of a proper SWPPP is a requirement of the permit and the responsibility of the owner.

### What is a SWPPP?

A SWPPP is a plan that describes the strategies and steps that will be taken to prevent nonpoint source pollution discharging from a construction site. The SWPPP is a valuable tool and will become the backbone of the entire construction process related to erosion and sediment control and stormwater management, both during construction and post construction. The SWPPP includes a description of all construction activity, temporary and permanent erosion and sediment control BMPs, permanent stormwater management, and other pollution prevention techniques to be implemented throughout the life of the construction project. The SWPPP includes a combination of narrative plans and standard detail sheets.

### Why do I need a SWPPP?

All construction projects disturbing one acre or more or that are part of a larger common plan of development that ultimately disturbs one acre or more are required to apply for an NPDES/SDS construction stormwater permit through the MPCA. The permit states that prior to submitting a permit application, the owner must develop a SWPPP for the construction site. The SWPPP is to be kept

at the site for the duration of the project and retained in files for three years after the project is completed. If the construction project disturbs 50 acres or more and discharges to a special or impaired water, the SWPPP must be submitted along with the permit application to the MPCA 30 days prior to the start of any construction activity.



Planning ahead is the most effective way to minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction and reduce project costs.

### How is a SWPPP helpful to me?

A successful SWPPP identifies the issues of concern before construction begins and is also adaptable for the many unexpected changes that come about with every construction project. Planning ahead is the most effective way to minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction and reduce project costs. A well organized and planned out SWPPP will assist in the prevention of unnecessary permit violations and save the owner and contractor time,

money, and effort over the course of the project.

## What are the necessary components of a SWPPP?

The NPDES/SDS construction stormwater permit outlines specific requirements of a SWPPP. In order to develop a truly effective and useful SWPPP however, it is important to carefully think about each of these requirements and to clearly document a plan for the construction project.

- Identify all receiving surface waters; note any receiving impaired or special waters and the additional permit requirements for these waters.
- Identify the person to oversee BMP implementation and maintenance and define a chain of responsibility.
- Include a detailed description and timeline of all construction activities including the implementation of sediment and erosion control BMPs, as they are planned for at the start of the project.
- Strategically plan construction activities to limit the time in which soils are exposed; develop phases of the project so that some areas can be stabilized while others are exposed.
- Identify areas on site that can be left as undisturbed for the duration of the project or for a portion of the project.
- Clearly explain and include standard plates and specifications for all temporary erosion and sediment control BMPs.
- Estimate the quantities of temporary and permanent erosion and sediment control BMPs that will be needed for the duration of the project.
- Calculate the totals of pre-imperious and post-imperious surface acres. (*Minimization of imperious surfaces is encouraged.*)
- Plan out the permanent stormwater management provisions for sites resulting in more than 1 acre of imperious surfaces.
- Plan areas and develop specifications for all temporary and final stabilization.
- Identify all other pollutant sources on site and pollution prevention measures to be taken.
- Prepare inspection and maintenance documents for easy use throughout the project and identify a location where they will be kept onsite.

Note: additional information is required to be included in the SWPPP per the NPDES/SDS construction

stormwater permit. See resources below for a copy of the permit and other guidance materials.

## Changes and revisions to the SWPPP

The NPDES/SDS construction stormwater permit requires that the SWPPP be developed prior to the start of a construction project. It is often difficult to fully plan ahead and more often than not, unexpected changes arise throughout the duration of the project. For this reason, the SWPPP is a flexible and amendable document. It is a living document that should be revised as the project changes and should be used to document all project modifications. All changes to the project site must still fall under the requirements of the NPDES/SDS permit, but it is understood that the SWPPP will change as the construction project changes.

In the case of a change in property ownership, any new owner is required to have an up to date and complete SWPPP. The new owner can modify the original SWPPP or develop a new SWPPP that covers all information required by the permit.

Image Courtesy of Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc.



The NPDES permit requires that all erosion and sediment BMPs be clearly outlined in a site's SWPPP. Changes made throughout construction should be documented in the SWPPP.

## Resources

*Stormwater Compliance Assistance Tool Kit for Small Construction Operators.* MPCA.

[www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-strm2-09.pdf](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-strm2-09.pdf)

*General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activity.* MPCA.

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/stormwater/stormwater-r-c.html>

*Construction SWPPP Template.* MPCA

[www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-strm2-12.pdf](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-strm2-12.pdf)