

Soil BMP Requirements

in the WA State DOE Stormwater Manual,
and in local codes around western Washington

From the State manual to local codes – how it works

The “best management practices” (BMPs) in the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* are taking effect as town and county governments around western Washington update their local stormwater codes. These local updates are required to comply with NPDES (“National Pollution Discharge Elimination System”) municipal stormwater permits, which are issued by DOE as required by the federal Clean Water Act.

Where are the Soil BMPs required by code?

Most western Washington towns and counties are in the process of updating local stormwater codes, as required by their municipal stormwater permits from the State DOE. They are including soil best practices equivalent to the State’s BMP T5.13 “Post Construction Soil Quality and Depth,” which help protect local waterways and downstream property owners while giving new homeowners the healthy landscapes they’re asking for.

Jurisdictions that already require Soil BMPs – in their building permitting process (as of December, 2009)

- **King County** in Clearing and Grading regulations
See video, permit requirements, guide, and compost calculator at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/greenbuilding/site/soil-standard.asp>
- **City of Seattle** in 2009 Stormwater Code Director’s Rules, volume III Flow Control & Water Quality, chapter 4.4 Green Stormwater Infrastructure, at www.seattle.gov/dpd/Codes/StormwaterCode/DirectorsRules
- **Other cities around Puget Sound** have recently updated their codes to include the soil BMP, or are in the process – check with your local jurisdiction or permitting agency.

This list and links will be updated regularly as local governments complete their new regulations.

Soil BMP Summary – 5 Steps to Building Healthy Soil

- 1) Retain and protect native topsoil & vegetation where practical
- 2) Restore disturbed soils, to restore healthy soil functions, by:
 - stockpiling & reusing good quality site soil, or
 - tilling 2-3” of compost into poor site soils, or
 - bringing in 8” of compost-amended topsoil
- 3) Loosen compacted subsoil, if needed, by ripping to 12” depth
- 4) Mulch landscape beds after planting
- 5) Protect restored soils from erosion or re-compaction by heavy equipment



Washington State’s Soil BMP

BMP T5.13 in the WDOE *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* requires preserving site topsoil and vegetation where possible, reducing soil compaction, and amending disturbed soils with compost to restore healthy soil functions.

Read the State Soil BMP (2 pages)

BMP T5.13 Post Construction Soil Quality & Depth:

- www.BuildingSoil.org/tools/Soil_BMP_text.pdf
- It’s also on page 4-5 of the *Building Soil* manual, www.BuildingSoil.org/tools/Soil_BMP_Manual.pdf

The complete DOE *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* is available online at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/manual.html BMP T5.13 is on pages 5-13 to 5-15 in Volume 5, “Runoff Treatment BMPs” which also includes flow credits for using the BMPs.