



**Standard Operating Procedure:
Disposal of Landscape Material/Organic Waste
Temporary Storage of Landscape Materials**

Date: 2024/05/01

Version: 1

Review Frequency: Annual

Reasons for Procedure

Montgomery County (County) has a permit to operate a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) issued by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VAR040134). Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has entered into an agreement to meet certain responsibilities under the permit. This permit authorizes the County to discharge stormwater pursuant to the Virginia Stormwater Management Program and the Virginia Stormwater Management Act. The permit requires that maintenance activities, such as landscaping, and the temporary storage of landscaping materials be conducted in such a manner that contaminants are not released into the stormwater drainage network.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that landscape materials temporarily stored or wastes generated as a result of landscaping or landscape maintenance operations do not clog or cause contamination of the stormwater sewer system.

2.0 Scope

These procedures apply to all landscaping maintenance activities and operations by applicable staff and contractors, subcontractors, and their employees working on County or MCPS behalf.

3.0 Responsibility

All County and MCPS staff are responsible for preventing illicit discharges from their operations.

3.1 Managers and Supervisors

All supervisors are responsible for ensuring that staff or contractors who temporarily store landscaping materials or generate and handle landscaping waste are trained on the correct methods of storing or disposing of landscape waste materials. Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring training is conducted with the most recent version of the SOP.

3.2 Personnel Performing Landscaping

Personnel performing the job are responsible for following the correct procedures for landscape temporary storage and waste disposal.

4.0 Procedures

Temporary Storage Site Evaluation and Procedures - All landscaping materials temporarily stored shall be handled in an environmentally responsible manner to reduce likelihood of this material entering stormwater conveyances or local streams.

Disposal and Temporary Storage of Organic Waste

- 4.1 Locate the down gradient storm drain/stream/wetland where materials are to be temporarily stored and determine the travel path and distance for runoff from the storage area as a first step in evaluating any need for perimeter controls.
- 4.2 Storage on impervious surfaces that have a flow path to a storm drain/stream/wetland require perimeter controls with the following exception. No controls are required for storage periods up to 48 hours when weather forecasts call for less than a 10% chance of precipitation at any time over that period. The 48 hour window and precipitation forecast may be extended under the same criteria at the end of any 48 hour period.
- 4.3 For materials stored on vegetated surfaces: No controls are required for storage periods up to 10 days for storage on vegetated surfaces that provide a minimum 50 foot filter length along fully vegetated surfaces down gradient storm drain/stream/wetland. The storage area should be evaluated daily during precipitation events to monitor for material transport or other issues that require the installation of perimeter controls. Storage periods longer than 10 days require perimeter controls.
- 4.4 Perimeter controls for temporary landscape material may consist of compost filter socks or straw wattles, storm drain or culvert inlet protection, or silt fence. Contact the County Stormwater Specialist at 540-394-2090 or the MCPS Environmental and Maintenance Program Manager at 540-382-5141 for a site evaluation and guidance on appropriate controls.

Disposal of Organic Waste - Any organic, plant or soil wastes generated as a result of landscape maintenance, including but not limited to leaves, soil cores, grass clippings, or other debris shall be handled in an environmentally responsible manner to reduce likelihood of this material entering stormwater conveyances or local streams. Currently, organic waste not left in its original area is disposed of by County and MCPS staff at the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority for proper disposal.

4.5 **Grass Clippings**

Grass clippings shall be collected or blown back on to grassed areas. In no cases shall grass clippings be blown onto pavement, where they can then be washed down a storm drain.

4.6 **Soil cores**

Soil cores from lawn aeration shall remain on grassed areas so that the soil, organic matter, and nutrients may return back to the soil and any soil runoff remains on the landscaped areas.

4.7 **Leaves**

Leaves shall be picked up as promptly as practical in order to keep storm drains clear from obstruction, which could cause damaging flooding, and keep leaves from entering the storm sewer system. In the event leaves cannot be picked up in a timely manner, they should be blown back onto vegetated surfaces.

4.8 Sticks, limbs, or whole vegetation

Limbs, sticks, or other vegetative debris generated either as a result of maintenance activities or from natural causes should be cleaned up immediately upon generation or discovery. If vegetative debris cannot be removed from a site in a timely manner, it should be moved to a vegetated area where it cannot block stormwater conveyances or storm drains.

4.9 Proper Disposal

Staff and Contractors performing work, unless otherwise directed, are responsible for proper offsite disposal of materials.

5.0 Review of Procedure/Training

Supervisors are responsible for coordinating with the County Stormwater Specialist at 540-394-2090 or the MCPS Environmental and Maintenance Program Manager at 540-382-5141 with any questions regarding this SOP and to coordinate review of this procedure at least once every 24 months with all employees who have these job duties.

6.0 Regulatory Impacts

6.1 Stormwater Regulations

Illicit discharges, including wash water or rainwater contaminated with construction materials, are prohibited by the MS4 permit. This offense is punishable by civil and criminal penalties as illicit discharges constitute a threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, and are deemed public nuisances.

*Printed versions of SOPs with previous review dates are considered current as long as the version number is the same as the current version. Current versions of all SOPs are maintained on the County Stormwater Resources website.