



Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) An Overview

SWPPP

- Importance of Storm water pollution
- NPDES permit
- Explanation of a SWPPP
- Who needs a SWPPP
- SWPPP requirements

What is stormwater pollution?

Stormwater pollution is a growing concern as the population increases. Storm runoff picks up pollutants in dissolved and suspended forms and transports them to lakes, streams, rivers, oceans and wetlands. These bodies of water are where we get our drinking water, recreate and what all forms of life depend upon for survival.

How do we guard against pollution?

Under section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the EPA was required to develop and implement the NPDES (national pollutant discharge elimination system) program to protect the waters of the United States from untreated pollutants. The NPDES program requires all facilities that discharge pollutants from a point source into waters of the United States to have a NPDES permit (some exceptions are made). Within the NPDES permit a SWPPP (storm water pollution prevention plan) is required if stormwater runoff is among the pollution sources.

What is a SWPPP?

A SWPPP is a written plan that describes all possible pollutants that can affect water sources and the BMPs (best management practices) that will be implemented to reduce or eliminate these pollutants to ensure the best water quality possible. A SWPPP helps assure compliance with the permit's terms and conditions.

Who needs one?

If any one of the following activities relates to you then a SWPPP is required:

- ◇ Construction activity that will disturb one or more total acres including clearing, grading, and excavating activities
- ◇ An industrial activity that will discharge storm water into surface waters
- ◇ A mining or oil and gas activity in which storm water will come into contact with overburden, raw material, intermediate products, finished products, or waste products located on the site of such operations (including active and inactive mine sites) and discharge to surface waters
- ◇ A Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)

If you are not sure about whether or not you are required to have a SWPPP you should contact your state's Department of Environmental Quality.

What is required in a SWPPP?

Several parts make up the written plan:

- The project name and location along with the owner's name and address.
- A project description and the sequence of soil disturbing activities that will occur within the project area.
- A description of areas that will be disturbed

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SWPPP

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- and areas that will not be disturbed.
- A description of vegetation and soils.
- A description of receiving waters, outfalls, and wetlands in the project area.
- All potential pollutants must be identified.
- A description of pollution control measures taken from pre-construction to post-construction.
- A description of all structural and non-structural pollution control practices used.
- All maintenance that will be done to prevent stormwater pollution.
- A description of how inspections will be done on control measures, how often and by whom. A detailed log must be kept of these inspections and kept on file for at least 3 years.
- Spill prevention measures must be laid out in detail for materials, products, and hazardous substances.

- If a spill occurs, the control measures that will be taken for cleanup and prevention. Phone numbers and the names of spill control coordinators must be included.
- SWPPP must be signed and certified.
- A site map must be included with the following information: proposed grade and direction of stormwater flow before and after the project, impervious surfaces and soil types, location of areas not to be disturbed, location of construction phasing, and all surface waters that will receive stormwater runoff from the site during or after construction.

A SWPPP, NOI, and a letter of approval from the EPA must be kept on site from the day of commencement to the final stabilization.

The above requirements are generalized and may vary by state, city and county. The requirements are also determined by the type and size of the project. If you are required to have a SWPPP it is best to have someone who is experienced and knowledgeable put your plan together. Putting a plan together right the first time can save you time and money and possibly regulatory compliance problems.