Erosion & Sediment

Active construction and landscape projects, hillsides, slopes, bare soils and stockpiled sediments can be sources of illicit discharges into the storm drain system. That's because dirt, soil, sand, gravel, wood chips and yard waste can flow off of properties during a hard rain. Those materials and other debris can get deposited into storm drains or gutters and cause flooding by slowing or blocking the flow of rainwater into the stormwater system.

Prevent Flooding

The City maintains over 80 miles of concrete and dirt drainage channels and ditches that are designed to handle water flow from storm drains and canyon runoff, and then "channel" the water to local waterways and the ocean. You play an important role in preventing debris and sediment from blocking or filling the catch basins and flood control channels near your home. The Stormwater Department conducts regular inspections of these catch basins and channels, and performs cleaning as needed.

We encourage the public to notify us when a catch basin, channel or ditch is blocked or filled with debris. This will help minimize the possibility of flooding and help improve water quality. Please use our online or telephone hotlines to make a report. That is the quickest way to ensure crews will address your concerns.

For flooding, contact the dispatch center directly at (619) 527-7500.

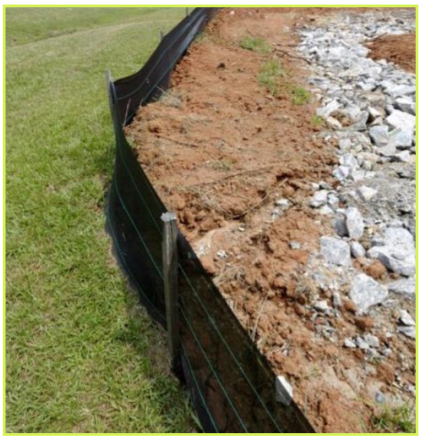
To make a report online, go to:
http://apps.sandiego.gov/streetdiv/

STORMWATER REGULATIONS

It is illegal to discharge sediment such as dirt, soil, sand, gravel, woodchips, and mulch into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) (San Diego Municipal Code §43.0304). Penalties associated with these violations can be up to $10,000 per day per incident.

Dirt and Grading

Dirt and gravel stockpiled on-site should be managed for dust control and covered or stabilized during the rainy season or prior to a rain event. Stabilize bare slopes with erosion control materials, such as straw wattles or erosion control blankets. This does not apply to natural, undeveloped areas, except where erosion is occurring as a direct result of on-site human activity, such as paving, land disturbance or vegetation removal.



Best Management Practices

Help reduce pollution and improve water quality by following these tips as part of your daily cleaning and maintenance routine:

- Exposed soils that are actively eroding, or prone to erosion due to disturbance, shall be protected from erosion.
- Provide erosion control - such as straw wattle, silt fences, erosion control blankets, gravel/sandbags and fiber rolls - to prevent sediment from leaving the site.
- Temporary measures shall be maintained and replaced as needed until a permanent solution can be implemented.
- Significant accumulations of eroded soil shall be removed or contained to prevent sediment transport in runoff to the storm drain system.
- Sweep surfaces regularly and dispose in a dumpster or trash can.
- Contain & cover materials to prevent runoff and spills, and keep materials dry.
- Once the job is complete be sure to clean up the area and properly dispose of debris. Waste material should be disposed of at the end of each day.
- Use a broom – not a hose – to clean up sediment and debris.

Keep Pollutants Out of Storm Drains

Many people think that when water flows into a storm drain it is treated, but the storm drain system and the sanitary sewer system are not connected. Everything that enters storm drains flows untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and, ultimately, the ocean. Stormwater often contains pollutants - including chemicals, trash and vehicle fluids - all of which contaminate our beaches and harm fish and wildlife.

Whether at home or work, you can help reduce pollution and improve water quality by using the above Best Management Practices as part of your daily cleaning and maintenance routine.