

## Information and Fact Sheet on Low Impact Development for Big Box Retailers

The Low Impact Development Center, Inc., Target Corporation, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have partnered to produce a fact sheet and manual for large buildings and high volume retailers. The information provides strategies that integrate innovative and highly effective Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management techniques into their designs for regulatory compliance and natural resource protection at the local level. LID is an innovative approach to stormwater management that uses decentralized, or source, controls to replicate the pre-development hydrologic (stormwater) conditions. This approach can be used as an alternative to or enhancement of conventional end-of-pipe stormwater pond technology. This alternative tool is important because of its potential to lessen the energy impacts of large concentrated volume of runoff from conventional end-of-pipe approaches on receiving water, as well as reducing the development footprint and long-term maintenance considerations for end-of-pipe facilities.

The information that is presented in the 75-page manual will help a design consultant or engineer utilize BMPs that will be acceptable to most of the regulatory agencies. This tool can be used to meet the NPDES Post Construction Stormwater Management Plan's requirements for this type of activity.

If you are designing a big box site, the SEPA Conservation Districts recommend you review the information contained in the manual, and utilize many or most of the concepts. Additional information and the manual can be found on the Low Impact Development Center's website at [www.lowimpactdevelopment.org](http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org).

*Dan Greig  
Chester Co. CD*



*Bioretention landscaping reduces water runoff and beautifies parking areas.*

## When do you need to revise the plans?

Many times I have heard that contractors had to revise erosion controls because they say, "it works on paper, but not in the field." On one particular site, for instance, the contractor decided to create a make-shift sediment trap, since the silt fence wasn't cutting it. The district was not notified, and upon inspection of the trap it was found to be constructed improperly and not even stabilized. Upon further review, the reason the silt fence was not working was because the contractor failed to direct the required drainage area to the sediment basin. So, in a case like this the district should have been notified and a plan revision completed with calculations.

There are instances when a field change may be all that is required. Sometimes at pre-construction meetings a contractor may need to move a stockpile or rock construction entrance. In that case the change can be made right in the field and the district can just sign off. But anytime the removal or substitution of a best management practice is considered, you are required to contact the district.

In the end it really comes down to communication. If you are planning on doing something that deviates from the plan on your site it is always best to check with your conservation district first. You wouldn't want us to come out and find that a whole sediment trap was removed because the plans were revised and we weren't notified. Remember that we are here to help, and we would rather have your site in compliance than under a field order or enforcement action.

*Kevin Boyle  
Delaware County Conservation District*

### Did You Know?

Pennsylvania produces 75% of the American White Ash wood in Louisville Sluggers, bats used by most major league players. BWP Bats of Brookville, Pa. makes 3,000 bats per week, including the one used by Johnny Damon of the Boston Red Sox in the 2004 World Series. That particular piece of PA is now in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

## Think *Outside of the Pond*

It has been common practice in the past few years to address onsite infiltration issues and implementation of water quality best management practices (BMPs) within sediment basins or traps. Converting sediment basins or traps into stormwater basins with infiltration beds or converting the sediment basin/trap into a wet “pond” and planting it with a wetland seed mix accomplished this practice. Meanwhile, the upslope drainage area to these basins conveyed stormwater runoff via curb and pipe.

Conservation Districts suggest thinking “outside of the pond” and implementing infiltration practices and water quality BMPs throughout site development. For example, if a stormwater basin is proposed, then a series of vegetated swales/bio-filtration swales, water quality inlets, infiltration berms, and/or small-vegetated depressions should be installed within the drainage area to each basin. Think of it as a stormwater runoff “treatment train”. One particular water quality BMP that could be used is a series of rain gardens.

What is a rain garden one might ask? A rain garden is quite simple. It is a shallow, excavated depression approximately 6” in depth to allow water to pond. It is planted with native vegetation that can endure wet and dry conditions. The bed material can consist of approximately 18” of modified soil/planting mix topped with a thin layer of mulch with leaf compost or shredded wood. Portions of the requirement to infiltrate the difference between the two-year pre/post conditions can be met within the rain garden if there is an acceptable infiltration rate. According to the *South River Federation & Center for Watershed Protection, 2002*, rain gardens allow 30% more water to seep into the ground than a conventional lawn.

How does a rain garden function? In Chapter 6 of the proposed *PA Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual*, the above-mentioned components, i.e. ponding area, vegetation, mulch layer and planting soil, help and/or enhance the following two natural processes: the ponding area provides temporary surface storage of stormwater runoff that also allows for evaporation and the ponding of water allows sediment to settle out of stormwater runoff. The vegetation promotes evapotranspiration of stormwater and root development, which promotes a pathway for water to infiltrate. The vegetation also provides habitat for animals and insects and is aesthetically pleasing. The organic layer of mulch acts as a filter for pollutants in stormwater runoff, protects the soil from drying and eroding and provides a medium for biological growth, decomposition of organic material, and absorption of heavy metals.

So how does this relate to infiltration and plan design? According to the Chester County Water Resource Authority’s *Post Construction Stormwater Model Ordinance*, Section 4.1.2, page 20, infiltration practices should include a series of depressed areas e.g. rain gardens, “combined with subsurface infiltration practices, followed by other subsurface measures, including but not limited to, porous paving and perforated pipe storage.” This type of water quality treatment train combined with infiltration practices encourages the disconnection of concentrated flows, infiltrating as close to the source as possible, and discourages having one large stormwater basin that attempts to handle all of the

volume control and water quality BMPs.

This message is not only intended for engineers, but also for developers. After all, the developer is the client of the engineer and the one who “pays the bills”. However, it is my hope that through public education, public demand, and published materials backed up with proven statistics about the benefits of multi-BMP implementation on any site, the developer would start to think “outside of the pond.”

*Adam Sauers  
Chester County CD*



*Rain gardens can allow 30% more water to seep into the ground than a conventional lawn.*

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## Five Easy Tips for Administrative Completeness

In order to ensure that your NPDES permit acknowledgment process goes as quickly as possible, consider the following tips for administrative completeness.

- 1. Be sure to complete all sections of the Notice of Intent (NOI).** An answer to each question is necessary for the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to publish the permit in the PA Bulletin and to administer the review of the NPDES permit by the Conservation District. If any sections are left blank, it will be considered administratively incomplete.
- 2. Check 'yes' for Section D.1 on page 3 of the NOI as long as motorized equipment will be onsite and could potentially spill or leak chemicals.** Although you do not need to submit it to the District, a Preparedness, Prevention, and Contingency (PPC) plan is required to be developed and kept at the site at all times during construction.
- 3. Identify the soils type, slope, limitations, and resolutions in the narrative, and show the soil boundaries on the plan set.** Soil use limitations can be found in the tables of your County Soil Survey, or on the web soil survey as it becomes available. Please include only the limitations relevant to your project and site. For each limitation listed by the Soil Survey, briefly describe where it is addressed by the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (for example, the Construction Sequence).
- 4. Double-check that each checklist item is found on the page number(s) list.** Do not leave page numbers blank or marked N/A. If you feel that one of the checklist items is not applicable for your project, list the page in the narrative that explains why. The E&S plan should include all checklist items (2.a-k), and should be titled *Erosion and Sediment Control Plan*. The PCSM plan should include all the checklist items (8.a-1), and should be titled *Post Construction Stormwater Management Plan*.
- 5. Enclose the land-use questions with your Act 67 and 68 municipal notifications.** Be sure that the letters to the municipalities include language that demonstrates to the Conservation District that the DEP General Information Form (GIF) or the land-use questions from the GIF were included in the notifications. A sample letter which contains this verbiage is included in the *Instructions for a General (PAG-2) or Individual NPDES Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities*, which was updated in January, 2006.

Disclaimer: Please note that these tips are based on a few of the most frequent comments made during the review for administrative and technical completeness at Montgomery County, and are not to be considered an all-inclusive list for a complete submission.


Maggie L. Allio  
Montgomery County CD

## Reminder to contractors

Title 25, Chapter 92, NPDES Permitting, Monitoring and Compliance states in Section 92.83 (3) that – The Department (DEP) may deny an applicant coverage under an NPDES Permit if the applicant has failed or continues to fail to comply with a regulation, permit, schedule of compliance or order issued by the Department.

Also; Section 609 of the Clean Streams Law states that the DEP shall not issue any permit ...or renew any permit or amend any permit if DEP finds that the applicant has failed to comply or continue to fail to comply with any provisions of the law .. OR the applicant has shown lack of ability or intent to comply...

John Thomas  
Bucks County CD




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## Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practice Draft Manual ready for review

The long awaited draft Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual is now ready for review and comment. It is available for download electronically on the Department's website (<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgmt/wc/subjects/stormwatermanagement/BMP%20Manual/BMP%20Manual.htm>).

The purpose of the draft manual is to establish recommended guidance for stormwater management utilizing BMPs in the Commonwealth. Due to increased need to improve water quality and protect water resources through improved stormwater runoff management, the draft manual will provide the planning concepts and design standards to guide local and state governments, planners, land developers, contractors and others involved with planning, designing, reviewing, approving and constructing land development projects in meeting those needs.

The draft manual advances the most recent innovations in stormwater management focusing on preserving onsite and offsite preconstruction hydraulic conditions, including volume and rate management through local onsite management. Water quality components composed of structural and nonstructural techniques and technologies are emphasized and integrated in the manual. In an effort to coordinate stormwater management, the Department will also publish a draft Stormwater Management Model Ordinance at a later date.

PADEP will hold four informational meetings to present the Manual.

Allegheny County	May 2, 2006
Dauphin County	May 4, 2006
Lehigh County	May 8 2006

In addition, there will be one held at the Southeast Regional DEP office in Norristown on June 1, 2006. The Southeast Regional office and conservation district staff requested a meeting be held in the Southeastern PA. DEP accommodated that request.

Comments on the draft manual must be submitted to: PADEP, Bureau of Watershed Management, Division of Waterways, Wetlands, and Stormwater Management, PO Box 8775 Harrisburg, PA 17105-8775. The deadline for submitting comments on the manual is June 14, 2006.

The SEPA Conservation District suggests that you review the manual and make comments on the draft. The manual will be used extensively in the NPDES process by the conservation districts.

*Dan Greig  
Chester County CD*



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# Erosion and Sediment Inspection Pilot Program

The Chester/Delaware Homebuilders Association (HBA) and the Delaware and Chester County Conservation Districts have developed a new unique partnership approach to the inspection process. It is a voluntary pilot program that would empower participants with the certification to conduct and file E/S inspections of their project.

The objective of the program is to establish a pilot program that would allow contractor/site managers to conduct self-inspection for Erosion and Sediment Control in accordance with the prepared plans for the project.

Several members of the HBA will have staff attend a 6-hour training session conducted by the conservation districts. The training will include:

- Information on the environmental effects of uncontrolled runoff on the environment.
- Explanation of the Rules and Regulations in PA.
- Specific information on operation and maintenance of various Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Importance of following the construction sequence.
- Methodology of E/S site inspections and reporting.

After competing the training and taking an exam, the individuals will be qualified to conduct inspections of the site that was accepted into the program.

The pilot project will consist of approximately 15 residential homebuilders sites in Chester and Delaware Counties. A steering committee consisting of two members of the HBA, one representative of PADEP, and the two conservation districts will approve the participants. The steering committee will also review the progress of the participants in the program and will deal with any issues about the program.

Dan Greig, Chester County Conservation District Manger states “participants will benefit by being able to conduct E/S inspections on the site chosen and have the knowledge to quickly identify and remedy any control failures. If the program is successful, the conservation district staff will be freed up to address other significant environmental concerns in the county.”

The conservation districts will spot-check the site to ensure compliance and quality control. Greig says “This program is not a free ride for the developers. The people on site who have been through the training are expected to meet the responsibilities of the program and the regulations. If there are major violations to the regulations, or to the program requirements, the district will seek termination of the participation for the site, and will seek compliance through PADEP.”

The sites and developers participating in the program will be highly visible. The steering committee will promote the program via press releases, and there will be signage on site to show that the project is participating.

At the conclusion of the 24-month pilot program, the steering committee will assess the overall success of the program and provide a written report of recommendations for the future.

Delaware and Maryland currently have a site inspector certification program. The NPDES permit for Post Construction Stormwater requires self-inspection of the site. This program will provide the participant with the training to complete the self-inspections correctly and potentially be a model for a self-certification program in PA. For further information about the program contact Dan Greig at [dgreig@chesco.org](mailto:dgreig@chesco.org).

*Dan Greig  
Chester County CD*

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## Healthy wetlands can reduce mosquito populations

Contrary to what some people might think, wetlands can actually reduce the mosquito population, according to Robert D. Miller, of the Missouri Department of Conservation. "A healthy wetland provides habitat for many unique animals — including the natural enemies of mosquitoes," he explains.

According to an Indiana Department of Natural Resources fact sheet, mosquito populations are held in check in healthy wetlands by certain birds, frogs, fish and insects that feed on mosquito adults and larvae. Wetland restoration projects can decrease mosquito populations by providing proper habitat for such predators. For example, when Essex County, Mass., restored a 1,500-acre wetland, the mosquito population dropped by 90%. Other states, such as New Jersey, have also been controlling mosquitoes the "natural way" by eliminating small, stagnant breeding depressions and using water management practices to increase mosquito predators. These "natural methods" reduced the cost of mosquito control, over the traditional method of insecticide application, by more than 97 percent.

When designing wetland restoration projects, considerations should be made up-front for mosquito control. This does not mean that projects should contain only deep or open water. On the contrary, projects with both deep and shallow waters that are somehow connected are generally preferable. Design projects with a variety of water regimes to foster the development of a variety of plants and animals that will naturally include mosquito predators, such as dragonflies, damselflies, water striders, backswimmers, predaceous diving beetles, topminnows and mosquitofish. Mosquitoes can be further reduced with the erection of birdhouses that will attract insectivorous birds such as purple martins, tree swallows and prothonotary warblers. The addition of bat boxes is also a good idea. For example, a single little brown bat can consume 1,200 mosquito-sized insects in just one hour.



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## Bucks recognizes environmental accomplishments

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Bucks County Commissioners and the Conservation District recognized a teacher, two families, an organization and an elected official for outstanding contributions to the enhancement of Bucks County's environment.

Fourth grade teacher **Ron Swidor**, of the Central Bucks School District was named Conservation Educator of the Year, the **David & Sharon Bishop family** was named as the George Bush Farmland Preservation Award winner, and **Malcolm Crooks** was recognized for his outstanding forest stewardship with the District's Forest Conservation award. **The Buckingham Land Preservation Fund, Ltd.** was named the District's Conservation Organization of the Year; and **Manfred Marschewski**, Durham Township Supervisor (since 1982) and Chairman of the County Agricultural Land Preservation Board, was selected as the Elected Official of the Year.

Each of the winners received a proclamation from the Commissioners and a plaque from the Conservation District.

Anyone interested in more information on these awards or the District's Awards Program should contact the District at 215-345-7577 or at their web site; [www.bucksccd.org](http://www.bucksccd.org).

*John Thomas  
Bucks County CD*



*Ron Swidor, receives Conservation Teacher of the Year award from the Bucks County Commissioners as some of his 4th grade students look on.*



*Malcolm Crooks*



*Manfred Marschewski*



*David & Sharon Bishop*



*Al Pincus and Jan Tompkins*

## Follow guidelines . . . avoid penalties

During the first three months of 2006, the Bucks County Conservation District has administered 15 enforcement actions for violations of the Clean Streams Law, Chapter 102 "Erosion Control" and the federal NPDES Construction Permit program;

- Conservancy/Martin - \$2,500.00 (to be resolved via an environmental improvement project)
- E&H Realty/Canal Road Development - \$1,500.00
- Cracker Barrel - \$750.00
- Smokey Bones Restaurant - \$4,000.00
- Kevin Lenover - \$7000.00
- Upper Mountain Estates - \$2,000.00
- Windsor Square - \$4,000.00
- RicLin Homes - \$3,500.00
- Retail & Restaurants - \$6,000.00
- Otter Creek Restoration - \$52,500.00
- Parsons Grading - \$1000.00
- Delaurentis Construction Group - \$800.00
- Belvedere Square - \$7,500.00
- J&S Development - \$2,750.00
- Rosecliffe/KC Construction - \$6,000.00

It's safer for our environment and more cost effective for everyone when proper erosion control methods are applied the first time around. There have been clear guidelines in place for 30 years, and the district staff is always ready to answer any questions and provide advice.

*John Thomas  
Bucks County CD*



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**CONSERVATION & YOU** is published by the Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery County Conservation Districts in cooperation with the PaDEP, Bureau of Land and Water Conservation. For advertising information, call (610)892-9484.

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