PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The state of Virginia requires that **all** permitted land-disturbing activities meet certain Erosion and Sediment control criteria. These criteria are known as the *19 minimum standards* and can be found in the ***Virginia Erosion and Stormwater Management Handbook.***

The minimum standards are designed to maintain the following:

1. To stabilize the exposed soil as soon as possible with vegetation or stone.
2. Minimize the changes in the natural drainage patterns and topography.
3. Prevent rills and gullies on cut and fill slopes.
4. Protect and limit activities within and around natural streambeds.
5. Protect downstream and adjacent properties from erosion, sedimentation and damage due to flooding.

Local county ordinances may have stricter standards regarding erosion control and stormwater management.

Q: Where can I find the Erosion and Stormwater Management Handbook?
A: Contact DEQ.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ): Stormwater Handbook

STILL THINKING ABOUT MOVING DIRT?

If you are intending to move dirt, contact your County Planning & Zoning Departments for information on Land-disturbing permit requirements.

Culpeper County

Planning & Zoning: (540) 727-3404

Greene County

Planning & Zoning (434) 985-5282

Madison County

Zoning Administration (540) 948-6102

Orange County

Planning & Zoning: (540) 672-4347

Rappahannock County

Zoning Administration (540) 675-5330

Q: Technical advice or questions?
A: Contact the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District.

Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District

351 Lakeside Drive
Culpeper, Va. 22701
Phone (540) 825-8591
Fax (540) 645-6624
Madison (540) 948-7531
www.culpeperswcd.org
https://www.facebook.com/CulpeperSoilandWater

Pub. Jan. 1, 2024

MOVIN' DIRT!

A Landowner's Guide to Erosion Control

An example of a site that lacks good Erosion and Sediment Control measures. Does your site look like this?
Look inside to learn how to reduce erosion damage on your site and your neighbor's.

WANT TO MOVE DIRT?

Movin' dirt for construction can have ugly and unpleasant impacts to surrounding areas. If left unprotected, disturbed soil can be lost to erosion. Losing soil reduces the quality of the remaining topsoil and the resulting sediment deposition can impact drinking water and fish habitat. Movin' dirt requires careful consideration of erosion control for each site. Erosion control programs are run by local governments to minimize these potential impacts of soil erosion.

UNDERSTANDING EROSION

Erosion is the wearing away of soils due to water, wind, and gravity. Erosion occurs when soil is left unprotected from these forces of nature. Water has the greatest impact on erosion due to the frequency and power of rainstorms. There are five types of water erosion:

1. Raindrop erosion is the initial impact of rain that dislodges soil particles.
2. Sheet erosion is the uniform removal of soil in thin layers due to sheet or overland flow.
3. Rills are caused by small concentrations of flow, usually a few inches deep, that transports detached soil.
4. Gullies are larger concentrations than rills and harder to repair.
5. Channel erosion is the removal of soil from the stream bed and bank.

An Example of Rills and Gully Erosion

HOW CAN EROSION BE STOPPED?

Soil movement can be stopped in two ways; **Erosion control and Sediment control**. The combination of both approaches usually provides the best protection.

Erosion control prevents erosion from starting by minimizing the amount of soil exposed and exposure time. Erosion control measures include the immediate use of vegetative and artificial cover to stabilize bare and vulnerable surfaces. Ground cover protects against raindrops and disperses concentrated surface flows.

Example of stabilization with vegetation and outlet protection.

Sediment control reduces the effect of erosion on adjacent areas by trapping sediments onsite that are being transported by runoff. Sediment control measures include filter strips (vegetative or artificial), sediment traps and basins, diversions, dikes, and silt fence to divert and filter sediments from entering clean water streams.

An example of sediment trap and silt fence. Note the vegetative stabilization on sediment trap berm.

WHAT IS A LAND-DISTURBING ACTIVITY?

Land-disturbing activities are man-made changes to the land and include ***clearing, grading or excavation***.
Land-disturbance over 10,000 square feet requires a land-disturbing permit from the local county and may require an erosion and sediment control plan.

Home Gardening; and tilling, planting or harvesting of agricultural or forest crops are exempted activities.