



Erosion Control for Residential Construction

Town of Hillsborough Information Sheet

By volume, sediment is North Carolina's No. 1 stormwater pollutant. Accelerated erosion resulting from human activity accounts for about 70% of the sediment reaching our streams, lakes and rivers. Excessive sediment significantly impacts our local waterways and your bank account.

Excess sediment:

- Fills up storm drains and catch basins, increasing the potential for flooding.
- Lowers visibility in the water, preventing animals from seeing food.
- Reduces the growth of natural aquatic vegetation.
- Increases the cost of treating drinking water and can result in odor and taste problems.
- Disrupts the natural food chain by destroying the habitat where the smallest stream organisms live, causing declines in fish populations.
- Can transport excess nutrients, which can activate blue-green algae that release toxins and can make swimmers sick.
- Can clog fish gills, reducing resistance to disease, lowering growth rates, and affecting fish egg and larvae development.
- Requires expensive dredging to maintain drinking water intakes.
- Deposits in rivers, which can alter the flow of water and reduce water depth, making navigation and recreational use more difficult.

The most concentrated sediment releases come from construction activities. For this reason, the Town of Hillsborough contracts with the Orange County Erosion Control Department to review and approve erosion control plans and inspect construction sites.

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Excess sediment lowers visibility, impairs navigation and increases the cost to treat drinking water.



Excess sediment impairs aquatic ecosystems, reduces fish populations and reduces recreation.

Erosion Control for Residential Construction

1. Limit clearing to the minimum necessary.
2. Install and maintain a silt fence on the downstream side of the project.
3. Install and maintain a silt fence outlet.
4. Sweep roadways and driveways regularly.
5. Install a gravel construction entrance.
6. Limit the number of vehicles that drive on bare soils.
7. Keep vehicles off bare soils when it is raining or wet.
8. Stabilize the construction site with suitable mulch and grass seed within seven days of completing the project.
9. Install sod for new construction as a great way to stabilize the site.
10. Watch the weather and plan accordingly.



This is a properly installed silt fence. Be sure to trench in the bottom of the fence.

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Land disturbance of 20,000 square feet or more requires an approved erosion control plan and permit from Orange County before clearing for construction can begin.

However, even small projects under the 20,000-square-foot threshold can result in significant sediment-laden stormwater runoff. Single-family residential construction — including minor projects such as room additions, garages, and swimming pools — can result in significant amounts of sediment leaving the site.

To combat this, the town requires that best management practices be followed. These include installation of a silt fence and silt fence outlets as appropriate. It should be noted that any sediment from construction that reaches a stormwater conveyance — such as a ditch, pipe, catch basin, inlet, culvert or waterway — is considered an illicit discharge, pursuant to the town's municipal code, and is subject to a violation with possible civil penalties.

Do your part and keep excess sediment out of our local streams and the Eno River by following best management practices for your next construction project.



This is a proper silt fence outlet. Be sure to use clean No. 57 stone.

Stormwater and Environmental Services Division

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