



Does Your Construction Site Need a Stormwater Permit?

A Construction Site Operator's Guide to Rule 5 Stormwater Permitting

Do I need a Permit?

If you are wondering if you need a permit, ask yourself these questions:

- Does your construction project disturb 1 or more acres of land through removing vegetative cover, clearing, grading, excavating, or stockpiling of fill material? Remember to count the acreage of the entire project, even if you are responsible for only a small portion.
- Is your construction project less than 1 acre, but part of a larger common plan of development or sale?

If you answered “yes” to either of these questions, **YOU NEED PERMIT COVERAGE.**

Why do I have to get permit coverage?

327 IAC 15-5 (Rule 5) is the Indiana rule that was developed to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act. The purpose of Rule 5 is to establish requirements for storm water discharges from construction activities so that the public health, existing water uses, and aquatic biota are protected. The Rule 5 permitting program is regulated by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

What is storm water pollution?

Runoff from rainstorms and snowmelt picks up pollutants like sediment, oil and grease, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other chemicals and carries them into storm drains or directly into waterbodies. Because most storm drain systems do not provide any treatment to the water they collect, preventing contamination of stormwater is critically important or polluted runoff will be discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and drinking water.

Why is sediment harmful to a waterbody?

Too much sediment in a waterbody can cloud the water and make it difficult or

impossible for aquatic plants to receive the sunlight they need to grow. Excess sediment also smothers aquatic habitat, clogs fish gills, and impedes navigation in our waterways, which can lead to expensive dredging.

I need permit coverage. What do I do?

- Review the SWPP and Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Review Checklist to determine the information you will need to provide.
- Determine the reviewing entities in the area where your project will take place. All building projects within the Greenfield City Limits go through the Greenfield Storm Water Utility. For projects outside of the City limits, plans should be submitted to the [Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District](#) (SWCD) for review.
- There may be fees associated with the review process.
- Develop Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) and Storm Water Pollution Prevention (SWPP) Plans. Information is available from local SWCDs, the [USDA Soil Conservation Service](#), [IDEM](#), and city or county engineering staffs. Some private consulting firms provide the type of assistance needed.
- The Greenfield Stormwater Technical Standards Manual and the [Indiana Storm Water Quality Manual](#) will also aid you in writing your plan. The Greenfield manual is available on the Storm Water Utility webpage.
- Submit your ESC and SWPP Plans to the reviewing agency.
- After approval by the reviewing agency, submit a Notice of Intent to IDEM, and the Hancock County SWCD or the Greenfield Storm Water Utility.
- Implement your ESC and SWPP Plans on your site. Conduct regular inspections to ensure erosion control practices are functioning properly.
- After completion of your project, stabilize the area, remove erosion control measures no longer needed, and seed immediately.
- Submit a Notice of Termination to IDEM and the Hancock County SWCD or Storm Water Utility when the project is complete.

Tips for Erosion & Sediment Control

Fit the development to the existing terrain.

Assess the physical characteristics of the site, including topography, soils, and drainage, to determine how best to develop it with minimal environmental damage. Utilize the existing topography to minimize grading. Utilize the natural drainage patterns where possible. Preserve any existing wetland in accordance with the law.

Develop an erosion and sediment control plan before land-disturbing activities begin, then follow it.

If necessary, get professional help in developing such a plan, which should identify the areas where erosion and sedimentation problems are likely to occur on the construction site and specify the measures to reduce those problems.

Retain existing vegetation.

If existing vegetation must be cleared, retain and protect it until the area must be disturbed. Maintain a buffer strip of existing vegetation around the perimeter of the site to reduce off-site erosion and sedimentation.

Minimize the exposure of bare soil.

Use staged clearing and grading (scheduling) to reduce the amount of bare soil and other disturbed area. Use stabilizing measures, such as temporarily seeding or permanent vegetation, sodding, mulching, sediment basins, erosion control blankets, or other protective practices within seven days after the land has been disturbed.

Keep sediment on the construction site.

Retain sediment from unavoidable erosion on-site by trapping it with sediment basins or by filtering it out of runoff with vegetative or man-made barriers. Install any needed sediment traps and basins before construction activities begin.

If possible, divert off-site runoff.

Use diversions, perimeter dikes, and waterbars to intercept off-site runoff and divert it away from the construction site. Install these measures before clearing and grading to reduce the potential for erosion.

Minimize length and steepness of slopes.

Use stair-step grading, diversions, and sediment barriers to break up long, steep slopes. Design measures to slow runoff and allow deposition of sediment.

Keep runoff velocity low.

Reduce runoff velocity by maintaining vegetative cover, preserving a vegetated buffer strip around the lower perimeter of the land disturbance, and installing perimeter controls, such as sediment barriers, silt fences, filters, dikes, or sediment traps.

Inspect and maintain erosion control measures.

Inspect all measures for damage after each storm event. Repair any damaged measure.

Citizen Involvement

Citizens of Greenfield can contact the Storm Water Hotline to report the illegal dumping of chemicals, heavy erosion from constructions sites, heavily polluted water, or other illegal connections to the storm system (such as septic tank discharges or washing machine wash water).

The Storm Water Utility will accept Storm Water Hotline calls at (317) 325-1327 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.