

Inspections

Local regulations do not require a particular schedule of inspections. Annual inspection by a qualified professional is recommended to ensure that the facility is functioning properly.

Your local Department of Public Works or Department of Engineering can answer questions about what to check for. At a minimum, an inspector should check for the following.

Vegetation Management

Vegetative cover serves several purposes in BMPs: slows the velocity of the runoff; filters sediment from runoff as it is collected in the BMP; and prevents erosion of the banks and bottom of the facility.

Grass is generally used around retention basins, infiltration trenches and in and around dry detention basins. It must be mowed and maintained. Mowing requirements can be tailored to the specific needs of a site and the neighboring properties. The grass in a BMP may be hardiest if maintained as an upland meadow, cutting no shorter than 6-8 inches. Maintaining a more manicured expanse of grass decreases the effectiveness of the BMP, as well as increasing its maintenance costs. Wetland plants may also be used along the fringe of the BMP in areas where conditions are favorable. Some of these types of plants may inhabit the area naturally.

The vegetation surrounding infiltration trenches or buffer strips also removes some sediment before the stormwater enters the BMP. If plants are damaged or become laden with sediment, they can no longer perform beneficially. Therefore, the condition of these areas should be closely monitored, and vegetation replaced if necessary.

Debris and Litter Removal

Regular removal of debris and litter is efficient and effective, having several benefits:

- Reduces the chance of clogging in outlet structures, trash racks and other components.
- Prevents possible damage to vegetated areas.
- Reduces potential mosquito breeding habitats.
- Maintains facility appearance.
- Reduces conditions for excessive surface algae.

Mechanical Component Maintenance

Each type of BMP may have mechanical components that need periodic attention to ensure their continued performance. Valves, gates, pumps, fences, locks and access hatches should be maintained at all times. Design and site factors will determine the amount of maintenance that is necessary.

Pest Control

Mosquito and other insect breeding grounds can be created by standing water. The most effective control technique in retention basins is to prevent stagnant areas. Prompt removal of floating debris helps. In larger basins, it may also be possible to maintain stocks of fish that feed upon mosquito larvae. The wave action created by surface aerators increases oxygen levels and also discourages mosquito breeding.

Animal burrows will also deteriorate the structural integrity of an embankment. Muskrats and nutria, in particular, will burrow tunnels up to six inches in diameter. Existing burrows should be filled as soon as possible.



Plants along the edges of BMPs filter pollutants.