NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Department of Environmental Conservation

MAINTENANCE GUIDANCE

Stormwater Management Practices

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DRAFT

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Section 1. Introduction

1.1. Stormwater Management Practice (SMP) Groups

Stormwater management has become an important function for municipalities to address the quality of local water resources and to adhere to state standards. Increasingly, stormwater management practices (SMPs) are constructed as part of new development or redevelopment projects as retrofits to existing infrastructure and/or as part of local watershed restoration plan efforts.

While SMPs are proliferating, municipalities are charged with a certain level of implementation and oversight. Whether this is a new function for a municipality or an expansion of existing programs, it is important for these local programs to have some degree of guidance to successfully meet the challenge. One important area where guidance has been lacking is how to properly operate and maintain the wide range of SMPs that are constructed. This chapter was developed to address this need. It is widely understood that SMPs will not function properly to protect water resources without attention to operation and maintenance (O&M), and that O&M tasks and responsibilities must be identified and assumed by various stakeholders.

The chapter is structured around a hierarchy concept where O&M responsibilities are shared by SMP owners/property managers, municipal staff, and other trained stormwater professionals. The hierarchy approach, explained in more detail below in Section 1.2, strives for a cost-efficient way to ensure long-term performance of SMPs.

The maintenance procedures described in this chapter are applied to ten separate SMP groups (**Table 1.1).** These same ten groups are used to separate maintenance inspection guidance, costs, and other guidance in the chapter.

Table 1.1 Practices Discussed in this Chapter, by Group

SMP Group	Practices Included
Rainwater Harvesting	• Rain Barrel • Cistern
Disconnection and Sheetflow	• Rooftop Disconnection • Sheetflow to Filter Strip • Sheetflow to Riparian Buffers
Swales	• Vegetated Swale • Wet Swale
Tree Planting	• Tree Planting
Bioretention	• Bioretention Cell • Dry Swale • Rain Garden • Stormwater Planters • Tree Pits
Green Roofs	• Green Roofs
Permeable Pavements	• Permeable Pavers • Porous Asphalt/Concrete
Ponds and Wetlands	• Wet Pond Design Options • Stormwater Wetland Design Options
Infiltration	• Infiltration Trench • Infiltration Basin • Dry Well
Sand and Organic Filters	• Surface Sand Filters • Underground Sand Filters • Underground Organic Filters

1.2. Maintenance Hierarchy

SMPs require inspections and maintenance to identify small problems before they become more serious and expensive to repair. For example, removing a small amount of sediment from a filtering medium or permeable pavement surface is much less expensive than replacing a surface that has already become clogged. However, it can be cost prohibitive for most communities or SMP owners to hire highly trained staff or contractors to inspect these practices or to carry out the actual maintenance tasks. This can be especially true with the advent of "micro-scale" Green Infrastructure practices, which may be distributed across many individual public and private properties, and where the absolute number of SMPs within a municipality may exceed local government inspection and maintenance capabilities.

Many SMP maintenance problems start out as fairly small, easily rectified issues as long as they are detected early enough through an inspection. For these issues, property owners or managers can likely take care of the issue in an expedient and cost-effective manner.

However, at some point, property owners or managers will encounter an issue where diagnosing the problem and knowing the appropriate remedy will exceed their technical capabilities. At this point, a professional with more training, such as a municipal inspector, may have to be called in for assistance.

Similarly, some problems escalate to the point where an engineer, landscape architect, horticulturalist, or other professional is needed to bring the SMP back to a good functioning condition.

Acknowledging this step-wise approach to SMP inspection and maintenance, the SMP Maintenance Hierarchy concept was developed. The concept uses a combination of skill levels (**Figure 1.1**) as explained in more detail below.

Figure 1.1 The SMP Maintenance Hierarchy Pyramid

Level 1: Property Owners and Managers, Interns, etc.

This category includes property owners, property managers, HOA representatives, municipal maintenance staff or interns, and volunteers. These individuals would typically have no or only very limited training in stormwater maintenance and inspection but can use available guidance to quickly identify and rectify common and simple issues with SMP performance. This level completes routine inspections and maintenance activities. For most SMPs, the majority of inspection and maintenance activities can be conducted at this skill level, thus Level 1 forms the base of the Maintenance Hierarchy pyramid. Many well-functioning SMPs can be adequately maintained for long periods of time using Level 1 capabilities.

Although many issues can be addressed at Level 1, these inspectors and maintainers need a relief valve when the SMP problems become harder to diagnose and/or the remedies require a higher level of resources and expertise. Such issues are referred to in this chapter as "kick-outs to Level 2." For instance, an SMP may have a minor amount of sediment that has accumulated at inlets or on the practice bottom. A Level 1 person may be able to take care of this with a flat shovel and wheel barrow. However, a Level 2 inspection would be triggered if the sediment is deep, widespread, keeps recurring, and/or requires more sophisticated equipment to remove.

Level 2: Trained Municipal Staff

This level of inspection and maintenance is conducted primarily by trained municipal employees or hired consultants and contractors who have completed training on SMP design, inspection, and/or operation. Level 2 inspections can take place in response to two circumstances:

1. As part of an ongoing, routine municipal inspection program whereby SMPs are visited on a rotating basis at a frequency established by the local program, or
2. In response to a "kick-out" from a Level 1 inspector based on a specific problem or problems.

Circumstance #2 obviously will require coordination and communication between the Level 1 and Level 2 inspectors, with documentation and background provided by the Level 1 inspector. This is an essential part of making the hierarchy approach successful. In the example above, the Level 2 inspector can better diagnose the sources of the sediment, whether the sediment is affecting performance of the SMP, and the specific tasks needed to remove the sediment and abate the source.

As with kick-outs from Level 1 to Level 2, the same can exist from Level 2 to Level 3. It may be that the Level 2 inspector encounters a problem where a more qualified professional (e.g., engineer or landscape architect) is needed to re-design certain components of the SMP, or a qualified contractor is needed to undertake a more serious repair. This is when Level 3 is activated.

Level 3: Qualified Professionals

Qualified professionals include professional engineers, landscape architects, certified horticulturalists, and other professionals who can revisit design issues associated with chronic or serious problems. This level can also include individuals with specific skills and certifications, such as a certified plumber who has experience working with rainwater harvesting practices. Level 3 inspection or maintenance is triggered in response to specific problems identified during a Level 2 inspection.

Continuing with the example above, the Level 2 inspector identifies that the sediment is accumulating in the SMP because of the lack of pre-treatment or that the practice is not sized properly for its drainage area. The Level 2 inspector at this point should consult a qualified stormwater professional (Level 3) who can go back to the original or as-built plan and develop workable solutions.

Table 1.2 further describes how maintenance and inspection activities differ among the three levels of the SMP Maintenance Hierarchy.

Table 1.2 Maintenance/Inspection Hierarchy Levels

	Level 1: Owners and Untrained Staff	**Level 2: Trained Municipal Staff**	**Level 3: Qualified Professionals**
Qualifications/ Training of Inspectors	No special training, but person is provided educational materials	On-the-job training and/or short workshops	Professional License or certifications, such as a PE, RLA or CPESC
Frequency of Inspection	At least annually	Routine as determined by the local program OR as kick-out from Level 1 inspection	Only as needed from Level 2 inspection
Inspection Guidance	Checklists are included for each practice group in **Section 2** of this chapter.	Guidance for the inspection is included in **Section 3**, and checklists are included in **Appendix XX.**	**Section 4** includes guidance for diagnosing typical problems. Checklists are included in **Appendix XX**.
Typical Maintenance Activities	Routine mowing. Trash removal. Plant care and upkeep. Mulching as needed. Removal of small amounts of sediment from pretreatment areas of the practice.	Removal of larger amounts of sediment. Structural damage repair. Minor regrading and scarification of soil surface to restore permeability.	Redesign an improperly functioning practice. Includes re-grading of the contributing drainage area, replacing soil media and plantings (new planting plan), or modifying conveyance structures.
Triggers for Inspection or Maintenance by this Level	Regular inspection (no trigger)	Level 1 Inspection Sheets (**Section 2**) describe triggers that warrant a Level 2 Inspection.	Level 2 Inspection Guidance (**Section 3**) describes triggers that warrant a Level 3 Inspection.

1.3. Using the Remainder of this Chapter

This chapter provides guidance for maintaining SMPs, including inspection, maintenance activities, and maintenance planning. The chapter includes four sections as follows:

- **Section 2** outlines Level 1 inspection and maintenance procedures in the form of visual checklists. This includes guidance for inspection of each of the 10 SMP groups/categories included in this chapter, as well as specific kick-outs for Level 2.
- **Section 3** provides guidance for Level 2 inspections as to observed conditions, remedies, and triggers for Level 3.
- **Section 4** is most relevant to Level 3 and includes diagnostic measures for specific problems, as well as guidance for performing repair activities.
- **Section 5** provides an overview of planning for maintenance, including techniques for estimating maintenance costs and elements of a maintenance plan.

Section 2. Level 1 Inspections

2.1. How to Use this Section

Section 2 provides guidance for Level 1 inspections of 10 groups of stormwater management practices (SMPs). See Section 1 of this chapter for an explanation of Level 1 in the Maintenance Hierarchy.

- **Section 2.2** provides general guidance for Level 1 inspections.
- **Sections 2.3 through 2.12** provide detailed Level 1 inspection guidance and inspection forms for each of the 10 practice categories:
    - 2.3 Rainwater Harvesting
    - 2.4 Disconnection and Sheetflow
    - 2.5 Swales
    - 2.6 Tree Planting
    - 2.7 Bioretention
    - 2.8 Green Roofs
    - 2.9 Permeable Pavement
    - 2.10 Ponds and Wetlands
    - 2.11 Infiltration
    - 2.12 Sand and Organic Filters

2.2. General Guidance for Level 1 Inspections

Regardless of which practice you are inspecting, some key procedures and equipment are necessary. Read through this guidance before going on an inspection, and use the specific guidance in **Sections 2.3 through 2.12** for the particular practice type you are inspecting. The Level 1 Inspection can be completed with minimal previous training. Typical Level 1 inspectors may include a property owner or manager (for private SMPs) or perhaps an intern or maintenance or landscape crew members in the case of a publicly owned practice. Level 1 inspections are the most frequent inspections. They are designed to identify key maintenance issues before they become more serious and to help keep up with routine maintenance tasks.

When to Conduct a Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection should be conducted at least annually for all practices and is often supplemented with additional visits after large storms, winter salting and sanding, or other seasonal changes. In addition, it is recommended that inspections take place more frequently during the first few years after installation of an SMP. Many issues can be identified and corrected during this early period so that they do not lead to larger problems in subsequent years. Plant establishment and health is one of these key issues. Once the SMP is stable and seems to be functioning properly, the inspections can become less frequent.

What to Take into the Field

The Level 1 Inspection is fairly simple, and it is assumed that very little measurement will be needed. However, the inspector should take pictures to document findings and should also keep a record of the inspections. The list of needs for the Level 1 Inspection includes the following:

1. Safety vest (if SMP is located in an area near traffic)
2. Notes or records from past inspections
3. Digital camera or phone
4. Clipboard and pencils (if using paper forms), or Tablet or smartphone if using digital forms
5. Bug spray (if needed)
6. Sun block (if needed)
7. Tape measure (optional, to measure pipe sizes and SMP dimensions)
8. Letter of permission to access property IF the inspector is from an outside agency (e.g., summer intern working for the municipality)

Checklist and Follow-Up Actions

The Level 1 Inspection checklists included in **Sections 2.3 through 2.12** describe follow-up actions for each observed condition (See **Figure 2.2.1** for an example). A Level 1 Inspection Table is available for each component or key area of the particular SMP group. Use as follows:

- Check the box in the LEFT column if the problem is present at the site.
- Check the appropriate follow-up actions in the RIGHT column, or add your own as needed to fix the problem.
- DOCUMENT all your actions. Keep copies of the Level 1 inspection tables, plus notes, photos, or other documentation of corrective measures to fix problems. Record dates of actions and any follow-up inspections. This will be important for communicating with Level 2 inspectors and/or the local stormwater program.
- Activate a Level 2 Inspection (**Section 3**) as guided by the table (shown in blue cells): These blue cells identify conditions when a more detailed inspection will be needed to further diagnose problems. As the problem becomes more severe, it will be necessary to activate a Level 2 Inspection by a trained local government or stormwater specialist. Consult the local stormwater program authority for the most appropriate Level 2 inspection option.

Permeable Pavement 1. Drainage Area	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
 ☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to get vegetation established. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and seed straw to get vegetation established. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small bern or adding topsoil to area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths.

Figure 2.2.1. Example of a Level 1 Inspection Checklist, with Follow-Up Actions. Note "Kick-Out to Level 2" highlighted in blue.

2.3. Rainwater Harvesting – Level 1 Inspections

Components of Rainwater Harvesting

Key components to inspect for Rainwater Harvesting systems include the following:

- RWH 1. Conveyance System (gutters, downspouts, other pipes) and Filter
- RWH 2. Storage Tank
- RWH 3. Outlets

Note: The category of Rainwater Harvesting includes:

- *Rain Barrel* – A small tank, usually between 50 and 100 gallons that can be installed directly next to a downspout. Multiple rain barrels can be connected in order to increase rainwater storage capacity. This is the most common form of rainwater harvesting on residential properties.
- *Cistern* – A larger tank that can be installed above ground or below ground, depending on the structural capacity of the material.

Figure 2.3.1 Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Rainwater Harvesting Systems

Rainwater Harvesting Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Conveyance System and Filter (RWH 1), Storage Tank (RWH 2), and Outlet (RWH 3). It is recommended that this inspection be conducted two to four times per year, especially in spring and late fall. If possible, inspect the system during or immediately after a storm in order to better see any active blockages, leaks, or other problems.

RWH 1. Conveyance System and Filter

Description: The conveyance system is all the components that collect and convey runoff from the roof toward the storage tank. This typically consists of gutters and downspouts, and sometimes additional drainage pipes. These components need to be kept clear of debris in order to avoid blockages and spilling of runoff out of the gutters. Every proper rainwater harvesting system also has one or more ways of filtering the water coming into the tanks from the conveyance system. These may include screens, first-flush diverters, and vortex filters.

Instruction: Inspect any gutters, downspouts, drainage pipes, and filters connected to the Rainwater Harvesting System. Consult **Table 2.3.1** below:

Figure 2.3.2 Inspecting the Conveyance System and a Vortex-style Filter

Table 2.3.1 RWH Conveyance System and Filter

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Leaves, sticks, or other debris in gutters and downspouts	☐ Remove all debris by hand. ☐ Other:
☐ Leaves, sticks, or other debris in filter(s)	☐ Clean out all debris and organic matter buildup by hand or by spraying with a hose. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Filter (first-flush diverter or vortex filter outside the tank) does not seem to be operating, is completely clogged, or does not appear to be trapping any debris.
☐ Loose or disconnected junctions between gutters, pipes, or filters	☐ Secure any loose junctions or parts and make sure they are properly sealed to prevent leaks, ☐ Other:

RWH 2. Storage Tank

Description: Many different types and sizes of tanks can be used for rainwater harvesting. They can be situated underground, above ground, or even partially buried. The tank body has an inlet (and/or cover) and one or more outlet points for water to leave the tank. Advanced rainwater harvesting systems usually also have a pump and a filter inside or outside the tank to further clean the stored water and pump it to the point of use.

Instruction: When the tank is full, carefully inspect for any leaks or blockages. Next, drain the tank to inspect interior. For safety reason, visually inspect the inside of the tank without breaking the plane of the opening with any body parts, as this is a confined space that should only be entered by those with special training. Consult **Table 2.3.2** below.

Figure 2.3.3 Inspecting the Storage Tank

Table 2.3.2 RWH Storage Tank

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Tank is above ground and not freeze proof.	**Winterize the tank by performing the following steps:** ☐ Drain down water level in the tank before winter to avoid damage from freezing temperatures. ☐ Drain water from pipes and pumps. ☐ Disconnect conveyance pipes from the tank to enable roof runoff to bypass the tank during winter.
☐ Mosquito larvae or other insects present in the water	☐ Add mosquito dunks to water. ☐ Ensure that insect screens are installed on all openings and are properly sealed (inlet and outlets). ☐ Other:
☐ Debris, algae, or organic matter accumulated in tank	☐ Remove as much as possible, by hand. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: For large tanks that cannot easily be accessed for inspection and/or cleaning, defer to Level 2 Inspection.
☐ Tank does not appear to fill fully even during large rains, or water level drops quickly after filling.	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Water is bypassing the tank and/or there are leaks in the tank wall. This will likely require special expertise to diagnose and fix.
☐ Problems with pumps, filters, or other mechanical components	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This will likely require special expertise to diagnose and fix.

RWH 3. Outlets

Description: An above-ground rainwater harvesting tank usually has at least two outlets—one at the top of the tank where water overflows when the tank is full, and one near the bottom of the tank for delivering the stored water by gravity feed. Many filters also have an outlet pipe to divert the first flush of roof runoff away from the tank. Any overflow outlet that spills onto the ground should have sufficient erosion control (e.g., rock or stone pad) to prevent erosion of the ground.

Instruction: Examine the outlet pipe(s) and the point at which it overflows onto the ground. Consult **Table 2.3.3** below.

Table 2.3.3 RWH Outlets

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Slow flow from outlet caused by faulty or clogged valve	☐ If clogging seems to be the problem, ream out sediment from valve if this can be done from exterior. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Valve needs to be replaced or cannot be cleaned out from outside of tank.
☐ Flow from outlet is backing up toward building foundation.	☐ Add flexible pipe to end of outlet pipe to divert flow further away and downhill from building.
☐ Erosion at outlet	☐ Add a gravel and/or stone pad to reduce the impact from the water flowing out of the outlet pipe during storms. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Rills have formed and erosion problem becomes more severe.

2.4. Disconnection and Sheetflow

Components of Disconnection and Sheetflow

The intent of disconnection and sheetflow is for runoff from small areas of impervious cover to spread out evenly and dissipate in a grassy or vegetated area. It is a low-technology practice intended to reduce runoff at its source. Key components to inspect for Disconnection and Sheetflow include the following:

- D&S 1. Drainage Area
- D&S 2. Level Spreader/Energy Dissipator
- D&S 3. Treatment Area

Figure 2.4.1 Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Disconnection and Sheetflow with filter strip shown.

R. Winston, NCSU

Note: The category of Disconnection and Sheetflow includes:

- Rooftop Disconnection – Runoff from a small rooftop is directed to a relatively flat pervious area.
- Sheetflow to Filter Strip – Runoff from a small parking lot, sidewalk, or other small impervious surface is directed to a relatively flat, uniformly graded grassy area.
- Sheetflow to Riparian Buffers – Runoff from a small parking lot, sidewalk, or other small impervious surface is directed to a relatively flat, well-vegetated riparian area.

Disconnection and Sheetflow Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Drainage Area (D&S 1), Level Spreader/Energy Dissipater (D&S 2), and Treatment Area (D&S 3). This inspection should be conducted twice per year, preferably in the spring and fall. If possible, inspect the practice during a storm in order to better see any active blockages, bypassing, or other problems.

D&S 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area consists of rooftops and/or impervious surfaces such as parking lots, driveways, or sidewalks. Pervious areas such as lawns or forests may also be part of the drainage area.

Instruction: Visually inspect any surfaces in the drainage area. Consult **Table 2.4.1** below.

Table 2.4.1 D&S Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Changes in flow; more runoff; runoff bypassing the practice	☐ For rooftop areas, make sure downspouts are still disconnected and conveying water into the treatment area. ☐ Look for and remove any “dams” of sediment and grass clippings that prevent water from entering the treatment area as sheet flow. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Changes to drainage area size or amount of runoff due to construction, tillage, etc.
	☐ For parking lots in the drainage area—sediment, grass clippings, or other debris has accumulated at pavement edge.	☐ For small, isolated amounts of debris, sweep up by hand and dispose properly so that it will not be exposed to runoff. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sediment is widespread and cannot be removed by manual sweeping.
	☐ For parking lots in the drainage area—dips or damage at pavement edge caused flow to concentrate.	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This will likely require special expertise to diagnose and fix pavement edge.

D&S 2. Level Spreader/Energy Dissipator

Description: Some disconnection and sheetflow practices have a structure in place to dissipate any concentrated runoff and turn it into sheet flow. This may consist of a stone or gravel diaphragm, a concrete or wood level spreader, or other level and stable surface.

Instruction: Inspect the energy dissipator closely, during a rain event if possible. Consult the **Table 2.4.2** below.

Table 2.4.2 D&S Level Spreader/Energy Dissipator

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Debris and/or sediment accumulated behind or around the level spreader.	☐ Remove debris and sediment by hand and ensure that the area behind the level spreader is relatively flat. Too much debris and sediment can cause runoff to bypass the level spreader structure. ☐ Other:
	☐ Sinking, cracking, sloughing, or other structural problem makes the energy dissipator no longer level.	☐ For stone/gravel spreaders, add new material or rake out as needed to make it even. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Structural issues that cannot be easily fixed by hand

D&S 3. Treatment Area

Description: After runoff is dissipated as sheet flow, it enters the treatment area–a relatively flat grassy or vegetated area.

Instruction: Examine where flow enters the treatment area as well as the whole flow path. Look for signs of concentrated flow. Consult the table below.

Table 2.4.3 D&S Treatment Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Trash and/or debris in the treatment area	☐ Collect trash/debris and dispose of properly.
 ☐ Grass filter strip has grown very tall, to the point that runoff cannot easily enter or is getting concentrated.	☐ Mow filter strip twice a year or more frequently in a residential yard.
☐ Sparse vegetation or bare spots	☐ For grassy areas, add topsoil (as needed), grass seed, straw, and water during the growing season to re-establish consistent vegetation cover. ☐ Other:
 ☐ Rills or gullies are forming in treatment area where flow has become concentrated	☐ For minor rills, fill in with soil, compact, and add seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Rills are more than 2" to 3" deep and require more than just hand raking and re-seeding.

2.5. Swales

Areas of Swales

- Key areas to inspect for swales include the following:
- SW 1. Drainage Area
- SW 2. Inlets
- SW 3. Swale Surface Area
- SW 4. Vegetation
- SW 5. Outlets

Note: The category of Swales includes:

- Vegetated Swale – shallow channel densely planted with variety of grasses, shrubs, and/or trees (also called bioswale or drainage swale)
- Wet Swale – a cross between a wetland and a swale, this linear system intercepts groundwater to maintain wetland vegetation

For the purposes of this chapter, the term “Swale” will be used to generally describe these practices.

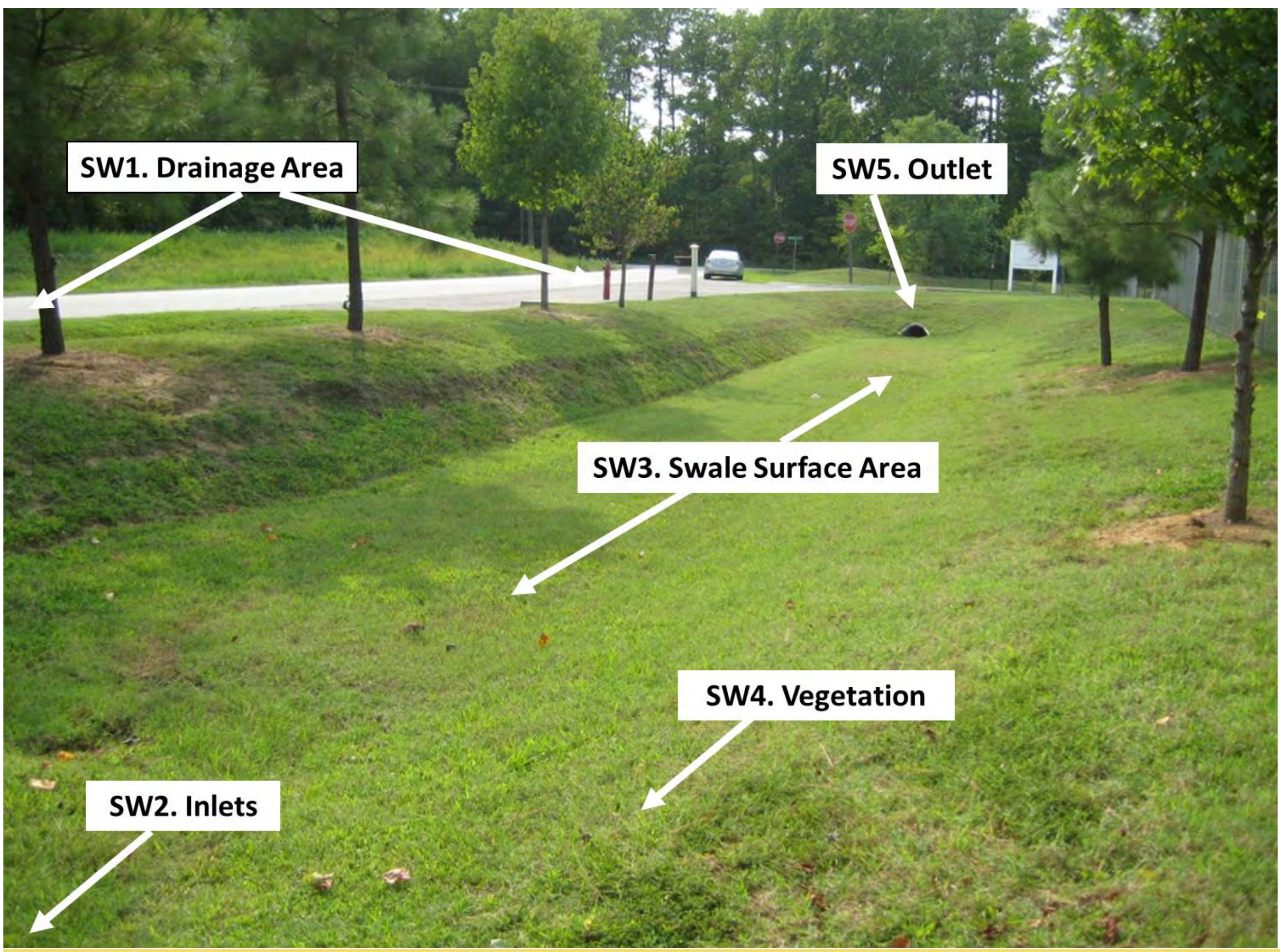


Figure 2.5.1 Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Swales Credit

Swale Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Drainage Area (SW1), Inlets (SW2), Swale Surface Area (SW3), Vegetation (SW4), and Outlets (SW5). This inspection should be conducted on a regular basis, with an early spring inspection to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a significant amount of snow. An inspection during the growing season or in the early fall is also recommended to check on the health of vegetation.

SW 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to and is uphill from the swale. When it rains, water runs off and flows to and along the swale.

Instruction: Look for areas that are uphill from the swale. Consult **Table 2.5.1** below.

Table 2.5.1 SW Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and add straw or sod to areas of bare soil to establish vegetation. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and add seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths
	☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Other:
☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances		☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous.
		
☐ Grass dying at edge of road		☐ Seed and mulch; add topsoil or compost if needed. ☐ Other:
		Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Grass on edge of pavement continues to die off for unknown reasons. Swale edge may need to be replaced with other materials (e.g., stone diaphragm).

SW 2. Inlets

Description: The inlets to a swale are where water flows in. Depending on the design, water can flow in through:

- Ditch, pipe, or curb opening at top of swale: This is the most common approach, where water enters the swale at the top.
- Along the entire edge of the swale: If the swale is along a roadway or parking lot, water may enter along the long side of the swale through defined curb openings or simply by water flowing into the swale from the pavement edge (known as "sheetflow").

Instruction: Stand in the swale and look for all the places where water flows in. Consult **Table 2.5.2** below for possible problems.

Table 2.5.2 SW Inlets

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Inlets or the swale edge are collecting grit, grass clippings, or debris or have grass/weeds growing. Some water may not be getting into the swale. The objective is to have a clear pathway for water to flow into the swale.	☐ Use a flat shovel to remove grit and debris (especially at curb inlets or opening). Parking lots will generate fine grit that will accumulate at these spots. ☐ Pull out clumps of growing grass or weeds, and scoop out the soil or grit that the plants are growing in. ☐ Remove any grass clippings, leaves, sticks, and other debris that is collecting at inlets or along the edge of the swale where water is supposed to enter. ☐ For pipes and ditches, remove sediment and debris that is partially blocking the pipe or ditch opening where it enters the swale. ☐ Dispose of all material properly in an area where it will not re-enter the swale. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Inlets are blocked to the extent that most of the water does not seem to be entering the swale.
 ☐ Some or all of the inlets are eroding so that rills, gullies, and other erosion are present, or there is bare dirt that is washing into the swale.	☐ For small areas of erosion, smooth out the eroded part and apply rock or stone (e.g., river cobble) to prevent further erosion. Usually, filter fabric is placed under the rock or stone. ☐ In some cases, reseeding and applying an erosion control matting can be used to prevent further erosion. Some of these materials may be available at a garden center, but it may be best to consult a landscape contractor. ☐ Other:
	☐ Level 2 Inspection: Erosion is occurring at most of the inlets or along much of the swale edge. The inlet design may have to be modified.

SW 3. Swale Surface Area

Description: The swale surface area is the vegetated area where water flows during a storm and also the side slopes that slope down into the swale bottom. Depending on the design, the swale may also contain “check dams,” which are small dams made out of earth, stone, wood, or other materials. The check dams slow down and temporarily pond water as it flows down the swale.

Instruction: Examine the entire swale surface and side slopes. Consult **Table 2.5.3** below for possible problems.

Table 2.5.3 SW Surface Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Minor areas of sediment, grit, trash, or other debris are accumulating in the swale.	☐ Use a shovel to scoop out minor areas of sediment or grit, especially in the spring after winter sanding materials may wash in and accumulate. Dispose of the material where it cannot re-enter the swale. ☐ If removing the material creates a hole or low area, fill with good topsoil and add seed and straw to re-vegetate. ☐ Remove trash, vegetative debris, and other undesirable materials. ☐ If the swale is densely vegetated, it may be difficult to do the maintenance; check for excessive ponding or other issues described in this section to see if the accumulated material is causing a problem. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sediment has accumulated more than 3 inches deep and covers 25% or more of the swale surface. ☐ The source of sediment is unknown or cannot be controlled with simple measures.
 ☐ There is erosion in the bottom or on the side slopes. Water seems to be carving out rills as it flows through the swale or on the slopes.	☐ Try filling the eroded areas with clean topsoil, and then seed and mulch to establish vegetation. ☐ If the problem recurs, you may have to use some type of matting, stone (e.g., river cobble), or other material to fill in eroded areas. ☐ If the erosion is on a side slope, fill with soil and cover with erosion-control matting or at least straw mulch after re-seeding.
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem persists or the erosion is more than 3 inches deep and seems to be an issue with how water enters and moves through the swale. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem does not seem to be caused by flowing water, but a collapse or sinking of the surface (e.g., “sinkhole”) due to some underground problem.
☐ Check during or immediately after a rain-storm. Water does not flow evenly down the length of the swale, but ponds in certain areas for long periods of time (e.g., 72 hours after a storm). The swale does not seem to have “positive drainage.”	☐ If the problem is minor (just small, isolated areas), try using a metal rake or other tools to create a more even flow path; remove excessive vegetative growth, sediment, or other debris that may be blocking the flow. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Water ponds in more than 25% of the swale for three days or more after a storm. The issue may be with the underlying soil or the grade of the swale. ☐ Water ponds behind check dams for three days or more after a storm. Check dams may be clogged or not functioning properly.

Table 2.5.3 SW Surface Area	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
 ☐ Check dams (if present): water is eroding around the edges of check dams, creating erosion or sinkholes on the uphill or downhill side, or the check dams are breaking apart or eroding.	☐ If the problem is isolated to just a few check dams, try simple repairs. ☐ It is very important for the center of each check dam (where most of the water flows) to be lower (by at least several inches) than the edges of the check dams where they meet the side slopes. Also, the check dams should be keyed into side slopes so water does not flow between the check dam and side slope. ☐ Use a level to check the right check-dam configuration, as noted above. Repair by moving around stone, filling and compacting soil, or adding new material so that water will be directed to the center of the check dam instead of the edges. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Many check dams are impacted and/or the problem seems to be a design issue with height, spacing, shape, or materials used to construct them.

SW 4. Vegetation

Description: The health of vegetation within the swale is perhaps the most critical maintenance item for the property owner or responsible party. Many vegetated swales become overgrown, and “desirable” vegetation becomes choked out by weeds and invasive plants. It is important to know what the swale is supposed to look like and what plants seem to be thriving or doing poorly. Periodic maintenance of vegetation will prevent larger problems that are more difficult and costly to manage.

Instruction: Examine the swale vegetation. Consult **Table 2.5.4** below for possible problems.

Table 2.5.4 SW Vegetation

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Vegetation is too overgrown to access swale for maintenance activities	☐ Mow or bush-hog the path. ☐ Other:
 ☐ Vegetation requires regular maintenance: pulling weeds, removing dead and diseased plants, adding plants to fill in areas that are not well vegetated, etc.	☐ If you can identify which plants are weeds or not intended to be part of the planting plan, eliminate these, preferably by hand pulling. ☐ If weeds are widespread, check with the local stormwater authority and/or Extension Office about proper use of herbicides for areas connected with the flow of water. ☐ Even vegetation that is intended to be present can become large, overgrown, block flow, and/or crowd out surrounding plants. Prune and thin accordingly. ☐ If weeds or invasive plants have overtaken the whole swale, bush-hog the entire area before seed heads form in the spring. It will be necessary to remove the root mat manually or with appropriate herbicides, as noted above. ☐ Replant with species that are aesthetically pleasing and seem to be doing well in the swale. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: You are unsure of the original planting design or the vegetation maintenance task is beyond your capabilities of time, expertise, or resources.
☐ Vegetation is too thin, is not healthy, and there are many spots that are not well vegetated.	☐ The original plants are likely not suited for the actual conditions within the swale. If you are knowledgeable about plants, select and plant more appropriate vegetation (preferably native plants) so that almost the entire surface area will be covered by the end of the second growing season. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: For all but small practices (e.g., in residential yards), this task will likely require a landscape design professional or horticulturalist.

SW 5. Outlets

Description: These are where water leaves the swale when it fills up or where water reaches the downstream end of the swale. There may be a small earth or rock dam here or even an outlet grate.

Instruction: Examine outlets that release water out of the swale. Consult **Table 2.5.5** below for possible problems.

Table 2.5.5 SW Outlets	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
☐ Outlet is obstructed with mulch, sediment, debris, trash, etc.	☐ Remove the debris and dispose of it where it cannot re-enter the swale. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Outlet is completely clogged or obstructed; there is too much material to remove by hand or with simple hand tools.

2.6. Tree Planting

Tree Planting Actions for Maintenance

Key actions to take for tree planting maintenance include the following:

- TP1. Watering
- TP2. Mulch
- TP3. Pruning
- TP4. Disease or pests

Note: This is a simple, "non-structural" practice and, as such, maintenance tasks are similar to any landscape maintenance. Tree planting can involve individual trees or more, such as reforesting a riparian buffer.

For this type of practice, inspection is part of maintenance to check on the health of the trees.

Figure 2.6.1. Key Areas for Inspection and Maintenance for Tree Planting

Tree Planting Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection goes hand in hand with active maintenance and includes watering (TP1), mulching (TP2), and Pruning (TP3). Watering should occur during the growing season. Mulching and pruning occurs once a year in the spring and early spring, respectively.

TP 1. Watering

Description: Proper water management is perhaps the most crucial maintenance activity to ensure survival of newly planted trees. Watering is essential during periods of drought, while over watering can be fatal. Watering options include regular or soaker hoses, sprinklers, buckets, drip irrigation, or installation of larger capacity watering tanks for irrigation systems.

Instruction: Inspect the trees to determine whether they need watering. Consult **Table 2.6.1** below.

Table 2.6.1 TP Watering	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
☐ Soil is not moist to the touch and/or it has not rained in a week, and leaves are starting to appear wilted.	☐ Water trees deeply and slowly near the roots. Soaker hoses and drip irrigation work best for deep watering of trees and shrubs. ☐ Other:

TP 2. Mulch

Description: Mulching is a common method of weed control and moisture retention. Organic mulch should be spread over the soil surface and out to the drip line of the tree (for relatively small trees). Slowly decomposing organic mulches, such as shredded bark, compost, leaf mulch, or wood chips provide many added benefits for trees. Mulch that contains a combination of chips, leaves, bark and twigs is ideal for reforestation sites.

Instruction: Mulch should be applied twice per year—in the late spring and during leaf fall. Consult the table below for possible problems. Check the depth of mulch regularly. Rake the old mulch to break up any matted layers and to refresh the appearance. Consult **Table 2.6.2** below.

Table 2.6.2 TP Mulch

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Mulch is too thin or thick (should be approximately 3" deep) or does not extend to tree canopy (or 5' radius if tree has a larger than 10' canopy reach).	☐ Add or remove mulch around tree canopy to maximum 5' radius but not within 3" of the bark. ☐ If mulch is against the stems or tree trunks, pull it back several inches to expose the base of the trunk and root crown. ☐ Other:

TP 3. Pruning

Description: Pruning is usually not needed for newly planted trees but may be beneficial for tree structure in older trees. If necessary, prune only dead, diseased, broken or crossing branches at planting. As the tree grows, lower branches may be pruned to provide clearance above the ground or to remove dead or damaged limbs that sprout from the trunk.

- Instruction: Examine the branches and tree shape. Consult Table 2.6.3 below for possible problems.

Table 2.6.3 TP Pruning

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Presence of suckers, dead or diseased branches, branches that interfere with pedestrian traffic	☐ Selective cutting ☐ Prune to make the tree more aesthetically pleasing and remove disease. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Use an arborist or landscaper for more extensive pruning jobs.

2.7. Bioretention

Areas of Bioretention

Key areas to inspect for Bioretention include the following:

- BR 1. Drainage Area
- BR 2. Inlets
- BR 3. Bioretention Ponding Area
- BR 4. Vegetation
- BR 5. Outlets

Note: The category of Bioretention includes:

- Bioretention cells – areas of soil, mulch, and vegetation that treat runoff
- Dry swales – long, linear bioretention cells, sometimes with check dams along a mildly sloping swale
- Rain gardens – usually small-scale bioretention practices on residential or small commercial properties
- Stormwater planters – usually in more urban settings, with soil and plants in a concrete box that receives roof runoff or perhaps other water from the site
- Tree pits – also a more urban practice where the bioretention is confined within some sort of box (e.g., concrete) and places along road curbs or other areas to treat runoff

For the purposes of this chapter, the term "Bioretention cell" will be used to generally describe these practices.

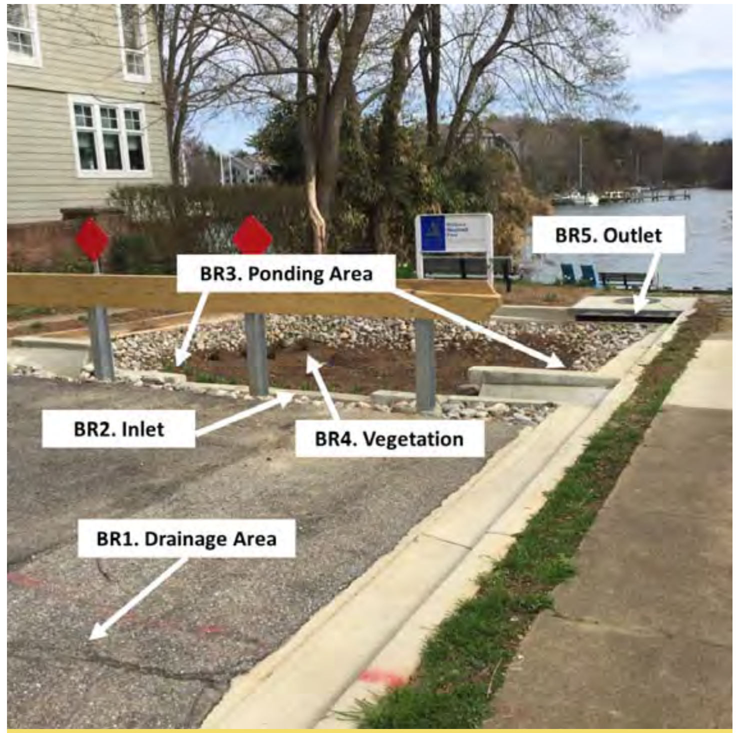


Figure 2.7.1. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Bioretention

Bioretention Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Drainage Area (BR1), Inlets (BR2), Bioretention Ponding Area (BR3), Vegetation (BR4), and Outlets (BR5). This inspection should be conducted on a regular basis, with an early spring inspection to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a significant amount of snow. An inspection during the growing season or in the early fall is also recommended to check on the health of vegetation.

BR 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to and is uphill from the Bioretention cell. When it rains, water runs off and flows to the Bioretention cell and ponds within the cell temporarily (usually for no more than 48 hours). Sometimes, the runoff will contain dirt, grit, grass clippings, oil, or other substances that SHOULD NOT be directed to the Bioretention area.

Instruction: Look for areas that are uphill from the Bioretention cell. Consult **Table 2.7.1** below.

Table 2.7.1 BR Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to establish vegetation. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths.
	☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Other:
	☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances	☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous. ☐ Other:

BR 2. Inlets

Description: The inlets to a Bioretention cell are where water flows into the cell. Depending on the design, water can flow in through:

- Curb cuts or openings in a parking lot or roadway
- Pipes or ditches that carry water into the Bioretention area from the drainage area
- Flow directly over the land surface (known as "sheetflow"), sometimes across a strip of rock or stone

Figure 2.7.2 Bioretention Inlets

CSN, 2013

Instruction: Stand in the Bioretention area itself and look for all the places where water flows in. Often there will be multiple points of inflow to the practice. Consult **Table 2.7.2** below for possible problems.

Table 2.7.2 BR Inlets

Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
 ☐ Inlets collect grit and debris or grass/weeds. Some water may not be getting into the Bioretention cell. The objective is to have a clear pathway for water to flow into the cell.	☐ Use a flat shovel to remove grit and debris (especially at curb inlets or openings). Parking lots generate fine grit that will accumulate at these spots. ☐ Pull out clumps of growing grass or weeds and scoop out the soil or grit that the plants are growing in. ☐ Remove any grass clippings, leaves, sticks, and other debris that is collecting at inlets. ☐ For pipes and ditches, remove sediment and debris that is partially blocking the pipe or ditch opening where it enters the Bioretention area. ☐ Dispose of all material properly where it will not re-enter the Bioretention area. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Inlets are blocked to the extent that most of the water does not seem to be entering the Bioretention cell.
 ☐ Some or all of the inlets are eroding so that rills, gullies, and other erosion is present, or there is bare dirt that is washing into the Bioretention cell.	☐ For small areas of erosion, smooth out the eroded part and apply rock or stone (e.g., river cobble) to prevent further erosion. Usually, filter fabric is placed under the rock or stone. ☐ In some cases, reseeding and applying erosion-control matting can be used to prevent further erosion. Some of these materials may be available at a garden center, but it may be best to consult a landscape contractor. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Erosion is occurring at most of the inlets, and it looks like there is too much water that is concentrating at these points. The inlet design may have to be modified.

BR 3. Bioretention Ponding Area

Description: The ponding area fills up with water during a rainstorm. If you picture the Bioretention cell as a bathtub, there is the *bottom* (usually flat surface), *side slopes* (areas that slope down to the bottom from the surrounding ground), and *berms or structures that control the depth to which water ponds.*

Instruction: Examine the entire Bioretention surface and side slopes. Consult the table below for possible problems.

Table 2.7.3 BR Ponding Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Mulch (if used) needs to be replaced or replenished. The mulch layer had decomposed or is less than 1-inch thick.	☐ Add new mulch to a total depth (including any existing mulch that is left) of 2 to 3 inches. The mulch should be shredded hardwood mulch that is less likely to float away during rainstorms. ☐ Avoid adding too much mulch so that inlets are obstructed or certain areas become higher than the rest of the Bioretention surface. ☐ Other:
 ☐ Minor areas of sediment, grit, trash, or other debris are accumulating on the bottom.	☐ Use a shovel to scoop out minor areas of sediment or grit, especially in the spring after winter sanding materials may wash in and accumulate. Dispose of the material where it cannot re-enter the Bioretention area. ☐ If removing the material creates a hole or low area, fill with soil mix that matches original mix and cover with mulch so that the Bioretention surface area is as flat as possible. ☐ Remove trash, vegetative debris, and other undesirable materials. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sediment has accumulated more than 2-inches deep and covers 25% or more of the Bioretention surface. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The Bioretention area is too densely vegetated to assess sediment accumulation or ponding; see BR-4, Vegetation.

 ☐ There is erosion in the bottom or on the side slopes. Water seems to be carving out rills as it flows across the Bioretention surface or on the slopes, or sinkholes are forming in certain areas. ☐ Source: Stormwater Maintenance, LLC.	☐ Try filling the eroded areas with clean topsoil or sand, and cover with mulch. ☐ If the problem recurs, you may have to use stone (e.g., river cobble) to fill in problem areas. ☐ If the erosion is on a side slope, fill with clay that can be compacted and seed and mulch the area. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem persists or the erosion is more than 3-inches deep and seems to be an issue with how water enters and moves through the Bioretention cell. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem does not seem to be caused by flowing water, but a collapse or sinking of the surface (e.g., "sinkhole") due to some underground problem.
 ☐ Check during or immediately after a rainstorm. The bottom of the Bioretention cell is not flat, and the water pools at one end, along an edge, or in certain pockets. The whole bottom is not uniformly covered with water.	☐ If the problem is minor (just small, isolated areas are not covered with water), try raking the surface OR adding mulch to low spots to create a more level surface. You may need to remove and replace plantings in order to properly even off the surface. ☐ Check the surface with a string and bubble level to get the surface as flat as possible. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Ponding water is isolated to less than half of the Bioretention surface area, and there seem to be elevation differences of more than a couple of inches across the surface.
 ☐ Water stands on the surface more than 72 hours after a rainstorm. The Bioretention cell does not appear to be draining properly.	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This is generally a serious problem, and it will be necessary to activate a Level 2 Inspection.

BR 4. Vegetation

Description: The health of vegetation within the Bioretention area is perhaps the most critical maintenance item for the property owner or responsible party. Many Bioretention areas become overgrown, and “desirable” vegetation becomes choked out by weeds and invasive plants. It is important to know what the Bioretention area is supposed to look like and what plants seem to be thriving or doing poorly. Periodic maintenance of vegetation will prevent larger problems that are more difficult and costly to manage.

Instruction: Examine all Bioretention vegetation. Consult the table below for possible problems.

Table 2.7.4 BR Vegetation

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Vegetation requires regular maintenance—pulling weeds, removing dead and diseased plants, replacing mulch around plants, adding plants to fill in areas that are not well vegetated, etc.	☐ If you can identify which plants are weeds or not intended to be part of the planting plan, eliminate these, preferably by hand pulling. ☐ If weeds are widespread, check with the local stormwater authority and/or Extension Office about proper use of herbicides for areas connected with the flow of water. ☐ Even vegetation that is intended to be present can become large, overgrown, and/or crowd out surrounding plants. Prune and thin accordingly. ☐ If weeds or invasive plants have overtaken the whole Bioretention area, bush-hog the entire area before seedheads form in the spring. It will be necessary to remove the root mat manually or with appropriate herbicides, as noted above. ☐ Re-plant with species that are aesthetically pleasing and seem to be doing well in the Bioretention cell. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: You are unsure of the original planting design, or the vegetation maintenance task is beyond your capabilities of time, expertise, or resources.
 ☐ Vegetation is too thin, is not healthy, and there are many spots that are not well vegetated.	☐ The original plants are likely not suited for the actual conditions within the Bioretention area. If you are knowledgeable about plants, select and plant more appropriate vegetation (preferably native plants) so that almost the entire surface area will be covered by the end of the second growing season. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: For all but small practices (e.g., rain gardens), this task will likely require a landscape design professional or horticulturalist.

BR 5. Outlets

Description: Outlets are where water leaves the Bioretention cell when there is too much ponded water. There are various ways that outlets are configured. They can be a yard drain type of structure in the Bioretention cell itself or a rock weir where water flows during large storms. Many Bioretention practices have an underdrain, which is like a French drain, that helps the Bioretention drain properly after storms. The underdrain pipe may "daylight" (come to the ground surface) at some point downhill from the Bioretention cell.

Instruction: Examine outlets that release water out of the Bioretention cell. Consult the table below for possible problems.

Table 2.7.5 BR Outlets

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Erosion at outlet	☐ Add stone to reduce the impact from the water flowing out of the outlet pipe or weir during storms. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Rills have formed and erosion problem becomes more severe.
 ☐ Outlet obstructed with mulch, sediment, debris, trash, etc.	☐ Remove the debris and dispose of it where it cannot re-enter the Bioretention area. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Outlet is completely clogged or obstructed; there is too much material to remove by hand or with simple hand tools.

2.8. Green Roof

Areas of the Green Roof

Key areas to inspect for green roofs include the following:

GR 1. Vegetation and Surface
GR 2. Overflows and Drains

Note: Green Roofs consist of green infrastructure practices applied on rooftops, wherein stormwater is filtered through a vegetated planting bed. Green Roofs are a unique practice in that they are often covered by a professional ongoing maintenance contract, and their design is highly variable depending on the specific product. This section highlights some key inspection items.

Figure 2.8.1. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Green Roof

Green Roof Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Vegetation (GR1), Overflows and Drains (GR2), and the Surface and Soil Medium (GR3). This inspection should be conducted on a regular basis, with an early spring inspection to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a cold year.

On a routine basis, the Level 1 Inspector should also ensure that the vegetation is surviving any harsh roof conditions, particularly during dry periods.

GR 1. Vegetation and Surface

Description: The green roof vegetation usually consists of succulent plants, such as sedums, and should form a dense cover over the course of several growing seasons.

Instruction: Visually inspect the surface and vegetation of the practice. Consult **Table 2.8.1** below:

Table 2.8.1 GR Vegetation and Surface

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Wilting or nutrient-deprived vegetation; bare areas developing on the roof	☐ Water or irrigate. ☐ Prune or remove dead or dying vegetation. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Greater than 20% plant dieoff or wilting, even after rainy periods. May require new vegetation or indicate a problem with the soil medium. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Yellowing vegetation may indicate a need for fertilizer, but do not fertilize unless explicitly included in the management plan or with a Level 2 Inspection. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Bare areas with no vegetation growing. These may become weed problems in the future.
 ☐ Weeds or moss	☐ Remove weeds by hand. ☐ Apply lime to kill moss. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Weeds cover more than 25% of the surface, or the original planting plan has been compromised.
☐ Ponding between storm events	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Surface ponding more than 24 hours after a storm event presents a hazard and needs to be addressed immediately.

GR 2. Overflows and Drains

Description: Green roofs typically drain through a network of underdrains to outlet at roof drainage infrastructure. These drainage structures need to be inspected and cleaned periodically to ensure that the medium drains properly.

Instruction: Review the specific maintenance plan for this practice to determine where inspection ports are. Remove the cover and inspect the port.

Table 2.8.2 GR Overflows and Drains

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Inspection port for roof drainage (can be clogged with debris)	☐ Remove debris by hand or flush through with a hose. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Debris cannot be removed, or it appears that debris has accumulated in the underdrains.
☐ Damage to other roof drainage structures (e.g., roof scuppers)	☐ Call contractor or individual in charge of regular building maintenance. This is a building maintenance issue. ☐ Other:

2.9. Permeable Pavement

Areas of Permeable Pavement

Key areas to inspect for permeable pavement include the following:

- PP1. Drainage Area
- PP2. Pavement Surface

Note: Permeable pavements include several materials, including porous asphalt materials, which appear similar to an asphalt parking lot, permeable concrete, and "interlocking concrete pavers," which are individual paving blocks. References to removing and replacing individual blocks of pavement refer only to this last category.

Figure 2.9.1. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Permeable Pavement

Permeable Pavement Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Drainage Area (PP1) and the Pavement Surface (PP2). This inspection should be conducted on a regular basis, with an early spring inspection to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a significant amount of snow.

On a routine basis, the Level 1 Inspector should also ensure that the pavement area and its drainage are properly managed. Some key activities to avoid include:

1. Applying sand during winter months
2. Certain types of permeable pavement should not be plowed with steel-bladed plows.
3. Poor management of dumpsters
4. Storing or placing dirt, grit, mulch, sand, or other similar materials on or near the pavement surface

PP 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to the Permeable pavement area and is uphill from the Permeable pavement. When it rains, water runs off and flows to the Permeable pavement area, and it may pond there temporarily.

Instruction: Look for areas that are uphill from the Permeable pavement. Consult **Table 2.9.1** below:

Table 2.9.1 PP Drainage Area

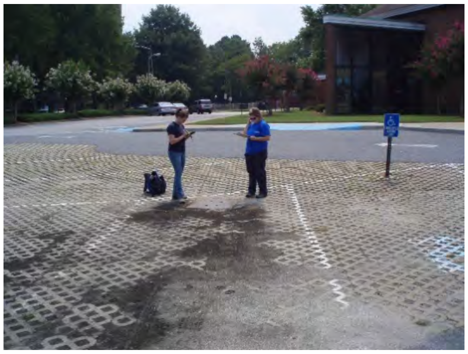
Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to establish vegetation. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths.
	☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Other:
	☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances	☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous. ☐ Other:

PP 2. Permeable Pavement Surface

Description: The surface of the Permeable pavement should be relatively clean (not a lot of dirt and grit on the surface), free of cracks and broken pavement, and should NOT hold water after a rainstorm for more than a few hours.

Instruction: Examine the entire permeable pavement surface. Consult **Table 2.9.2** below for possible problems.

Table 2.9.2 PP Surface

Problem (Check if Present)		**Follow-Up Actions**
	☐ Dirt and grit accumulating on pavement surface	☐ For small areas (e.g., driveways, patios), try a leaf blower or sweep the area to remove the dirt/grit from the Permeable pavement and properly dispose of the material. ☐ If dirt/grit remain in the joint areas between paver blocks, agitate with a rough brush and vacuum the surface with a wet/dry vac. ☐ Remove and replace clogged blocks in segmented pavers. ☐ For larger areas (e.g., parking lots, courtyards), hire a vacuum sweeper to restore the surface to a cleaner condition. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Grit is widespread and cannot be removed by manual sweeping.
	☐ Grass and weeds are growing on the permeable pavement surface (applies only to pavement types that are not intended to be covered in vegetation).	☐ If paver type is not intended to be covered in vegetation, remove the grass/weeds either mechanically (pulling, by hand or with a flame weeder) or with a herbicide approved for use in or near water (consult your local Extension Office for suggestions). ☐ Follow the actions listed above for removing dirt/grit from the pavement surface. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Grass/weeds cover more than 25% of surface area.
	☐ Slumping, sinking, cracking, or breaking of the pavement surface *(Source: CSN, 2013)*	☐ For small areas (e.g., patios, small driveway), it may be possible to remove the damaged pavers, check and fill in the underlying gravel, and replace with new materials. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Problem affects more than a small, isolated area. Will typically require a qualified contractor to fix it. ☐ Problem recurs or occurs in multiple small locations.
	☐ Water stands on Permeable pavement for days after a rainstorm; the Permeable pavement is clogged and doesn't let water through. *(Source: CSN, 2013)*	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This is generally a serious problem, and it will be necessary to activate a Level 2 Inspection.

2.10. Ponds and Wetlands

Areas of Ponds and Wetlands

Key areas to inspect for permeable pavement include the following:

- PO 1. Drainage area
- PO 2. Inlet pipes and swales
- PO 3. Pond area and embankments
- PO 4. Pond outlet

Note: This category includes the following practices:

- *Wet ponds* – have a permanent pool of water and may be divided into various “cells”
- *Stormwater wetlands* – have a variety of depth zones ranging from deep pools to shallow wetlands and are characterized by wetland vegetation

It is recommended strongly to have as-built drawings and copies of previous inspections at hand, if available. Aerial photos may be needed to help direct the inspector to the pond or wetland location if it is obscured by vegetation.

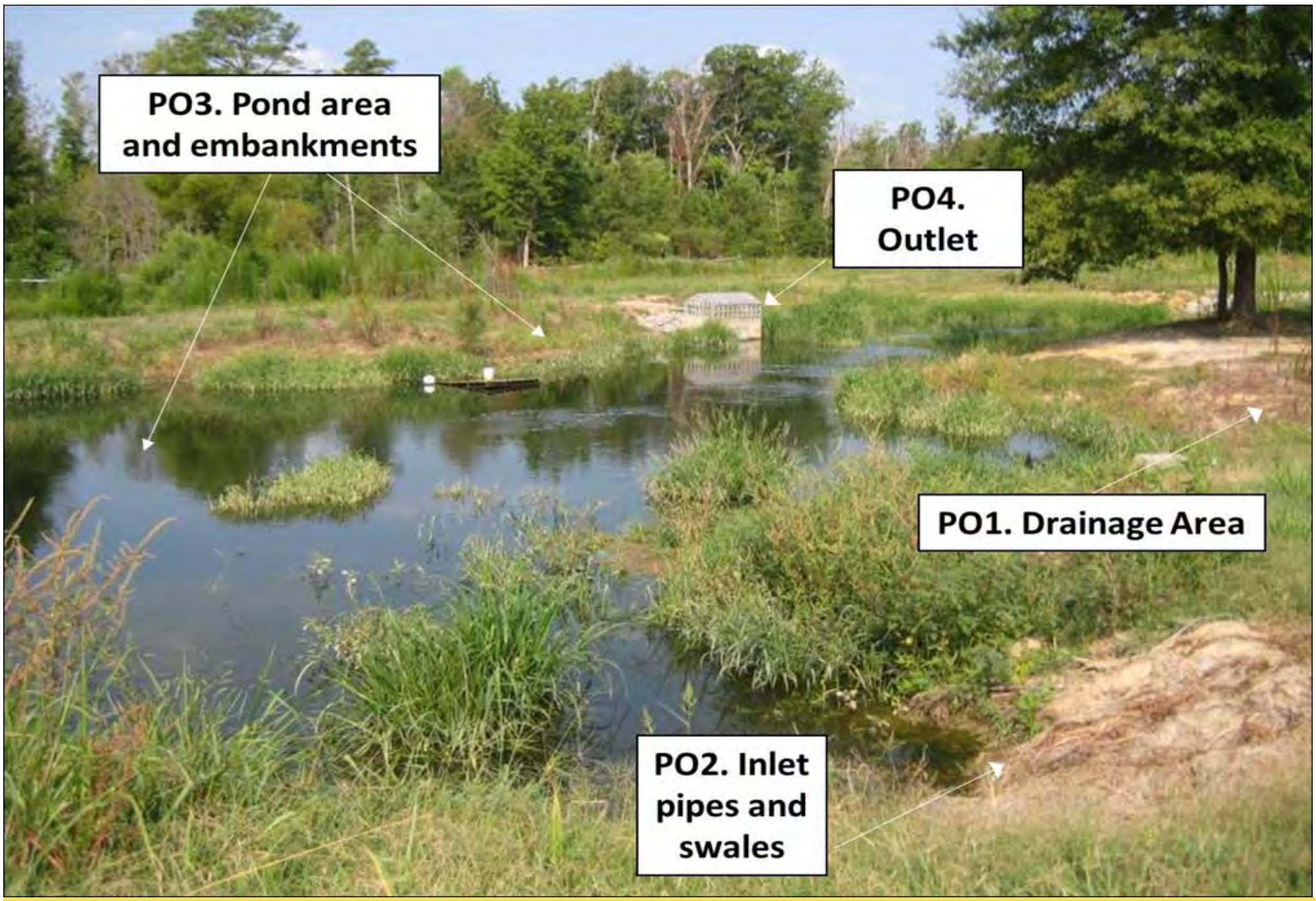


Figure 2.10.1. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of a Pond/Wetland

Pond and Wetland Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the drainage area (PW 1), inlet pipes or swales (PW 2), pond area and embankments (PW 3) and pond outlet structures and outfall (PW 4). This inspection should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that a buildup of trash, vegetation, or sediment does not interfere with the pre-treatment, pond or wetland, and the outfall's normal flow or function. Pond embankments and dams should be regularly inspected for evidence of erosion, burrowing or tunneling animals, and large woody vegetation growing on the dam.

PW 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to and is uphill from the pond inlet. When it rains, water runs off through roof drains, yard drains, parking lots, roadways and underdrains to the ponds. Flow is through underground piping systems, overland via swales, or across the ground as sheetflow. Sometimes, the runoff will contain dirt, grit, grass clippings, leaves and woody debris that can collect in the drainage system. If left alone, blockages can occur and increase the chance of shallow flooding or standing water. Standing water in drainage systems foster mosquitos, pipe corrosion, and possible nuisance and odor conditions.

Instruction: Look for areas that are uphill from the pond. Consult **Table 2.10.1** below:

Table 2.10.1 PW Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to establish vegetation. ☐ Fill in eroded areas with soil, compact, seed and mulch with straw to establish vegetation. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ If large areas of soil have been eroded or larger channels are forming, this may require rerouting of flow paths or use of an erosion-control seed mat or blanket to reestablish acceptable ground cover or anchor sod where it is practical.
 ☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Remove excessive vegetation or woody debris that can block drainage systems. ☐ Other:
 ☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances exposed to rain in the drainage area	☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous. ☐ Other:

PW 2. Pond Inlets

Description: Free, unobstructed flow from the drainage area to stormwater ponds is necessary to prevent shallow flooding and even structural damage from flooding. Pond inlets can consist of pipes, ditches, swales, or other means to convey stormwater to the pond or wetland.

Instruction: Look for all areas where water flows into the pond during storms. Note that there may be multiple points of inflow and types of structures (e.g., pipes, open ditches, etc.). Consult **Table 2.10.2** below:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Table 2.10.2 Pond Inlets</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Problem (Check if Present)</th><th>Follow-Up Actions</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">
</td><td rowspan="2">☐ Inlets are buried, covered or filled with silt, debris, or trash, or blocked by excessive vegetation.</td><td>☐ If the problem can be remedied with hand tools and done in a safe manner, remove vegetation, trash, woody debris, etc. from blocking inlet structures.
☐ Other:</td></tr>
<tr><td>☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 or 3 Inspection: If the amount of material is too large to handle OR there are ANY safety concerns about working in standing water, soft sediment, etc., the work will likely have to be performed by a qualified contractor.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>☐ Inlets are broken, and, with pieces of pipe or concrete falling into the pond, there is erosion around the inlet, there is open space under the pipe, or there is erosion where the inlet meets the pond</td><td>☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: These types of structural or erosion problems are more serious and will require a qualified contractor to repair.</td></tr>
</table>

PW 3. Pond Area and Embankments

Description: The pond area and embankment can consist of the following elements:

- Pre-treatment cell or small holding area where water first flows into the pond from the various inlets. These are commonly referred to as “forebays” and will be demarcated from the main pond area by small dams made of earth or rock. The purpose of forebays is to capture some of the sediment and pollutants before they reach the deep pool, making maintenance easier over time. Not all ponds will have forebays.
- The pond surface can be open water or a combination of open water and areas with wetland vegetation. Sometimes there is a shallow bench around the perimeter of a pond, known as an “aquatic bench.”
- The “side slopes” are areas around the perimeter of the pond where the surrounding land slopes down to the pond surface.
- Most ponds will have a “riser structure,” where the water exits a pond during storms. This can be a concrete or metal pipe that is open at the top, often with some type of trash rack. Some ponds also have an “emergency spillway,” which is an open, rock-lined channel that carries water from large storms safely across the embankment.
- The dam or embankment holds water in the pond and is constructed of compacted soil, such as clay. There is often a pipe through the embankment that carries water from the riser structure safely through the dam to the downstream channel.

The pond’s pre-treatment areas or forebays should not be choked with vegetation or full of sediment. Removal of excessive vegetation and sediment and selective replanting are often annual maintenance activities.

Likewise, the pond’s deep pool should not to be choked with vegetation or filled with sediment. Vegetation and sediment bars can restrict flow and cause short circuiting that reduces capture of sediment. Pond volume is to be maintained at the original design capacity and free of sediment bars or debris piles. Sometimes ponds are over-maintained and have no vegetation. Algae and turbidity (muddy water) are common problems in many ponds.

Instruction: Examine both interior and exterior pond banks as well as the pond body. Observe from the inlet pipes to the outfall structure and emergency overflow.

Table 2.10.3 PW Pond Area and Embankments

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ The pretreatment area(s) or forebay(s) are filled with sediment, trash, vegetation, or other debris.	☐ If the problem can be remedied with hand tools and done in a safe manner, use a flat shovel or other equipment to remove small amounts of sediment. ☐ Remove trash and excessive vegetation from forebays if this can be done in a safe manner. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large amounts of sediment or debris will have to be removed by a qualified contractor. ANY condition that poses a safety concern for working in standing water or soft sediments should be referred to a Level 2 Inspection or qualified contractor.

Table 2.10.3 PW Pond Area and Embankments

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ The pond area itself has accumulated sediment, trash, debris, or excessive vegetation that is choking the flow of the water, OR the pond area is covered with algae or aquatic plants.	☐ Level 1 includes handling only small amounts of material that can be removed by hand, or with rakes or other hand tools. Do not attempt any repair that poses a safety issue. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Most cases will call for a Level 2 Inspection and/or a qualified contractor. ☐ You are not sure what type and amount of vegetation is supposed to be in the pond. ☐ The algae or aquatic plants should be identified so that proper control techniques can be applied.
	☐ The side slopes of the pond are unstable, eroding, and have areas of bare dirt.	☐ If there are only minor areas, try filling in small rills or gullies with topsoil, compacting, and seeding and mulching all bare dirt areas with an appropriate seed. Alternately, try using herbaceous plugs to get vegetation established in tricky areas, such as steep slopes. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Erosion and many bare dirt areas on steep side slopes will require a Level 2 Inspection and repair by a qualified contractor.
 	☐ The riser structure is clogged with trash, debris, sediment, vegetation, etc., OR is open, unlocked, or has a steep drop and poses a safety concern. The pond level may have dropped below its "normal" level.	☐ If you can safely access the riser on foot or with a small boat, clear minor amounts of debris and remove from the pond area for safe disposal. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The riser cannot be accessed safely, the amount of debris is substantial, or the riser seems to be completely clogged and the water level has risen too high. ☐ There are safety issues with the riser and concern about access to pipes, drops, or any other life safety concern. ☐ The riser is leaning, broken, settling or slumping, corroded, eroded or any other structural problem.

Table 2.10.3 PW Pond Area and Embankments

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ The dam/embankment is slumping, sinking, settling, eroding, or has medium or large trees growing on it.	☐ If there are small isolated areas, try to fix them by adding clean material (clay and topsoil) and seeding and mulching. ☐ Periodically mow embankments to enable inspection of the banks and to minimize establishment of wood vegetation. ☐ Remove any woody vegetation that has already established on embankments. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Most of these situations will require a Level 2 Inspection or evaluation and repair by a qualified contractor. Seepage through the dam or problems with the pipe through the dam can be a serious issue that should be addressed to avoid possible dam failure.
	☐ The emergency spillway or outfall (if it exists) has ☐ erosion, settlement, or loss of material. Rock-lined spillways have excessive debris or vegetation.	☐ Clear light debris and vegetation. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Displacement of rock lining, excessive vegetation and erosion/settlement may warrant review and decision by Level 2 Inspector to check against original plan. ☐ Any uncertainty about the integrity of the emergency spillway should be referred to a Level 2 Inspector. ☐ Erosion or settlement such that design has been compromised should be reviewed by an engineer.

PW 4. Pond Outlet

Description: The pond's outlet enables the ponded water to discharge to downstream drainage systems or stream channels. The outlet is often at the base of the dam/embankment on the downstream side. Inspection of this point can help prevent flooding of the pond and upstream drainage systems and prevent pond failure at a weak point of a pond's containment system.

Instruction: Examine the outlet of the pipe on the downstream side of the dam/embankment where it empties into a stream, channel, or drainage system. Consult the table below for possible problems.

Table 2.10.4 PW Pond Outlet

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ The pond outlet is clogged with sediment, trash, debris, vegetation, or is eroding, caving in, slumping, or falling apart.	☐ If there is a minor blockage, remove the debris or vegetation to allow free flow of water. ☐ Remove any accumulated trash at the outlet. ☐ Outlet:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: ☐ If the area at the outlet cannot be easily accessed or if the blockage is substantial, a Level 2 Inspection is warranted. ☐ Erosion at and downstream of the outfall should be evaluated by a qualified professional. ☐ Any structural problems, such as broken pipes, structures falling into the stream, or holes or tunnels around the outfall pipe, should be evaluated by a Level 2 Inspector and will require repair by a qualified contractor. ☐ The pool of water at the outlet pipe is discolored, has an odor, or has excessive algae or vegetative growth.

2.11. Infiltration

Areas of Infiltration

Key areas to inspect for Infiltration include the following:

- IN 1. Drainage Area
- IN 2. Inlets
- IN 3. Infiltration Area
- IN 4. Outlets

Note: The category of Infiltration includes:

- Infiltration Trench – Long, narrow infiltration practice, usually with small gravel at the surface and a reservoir of larger gravel or stone beneath
- Infiltration Basin – Larger practice, usually covered with grass and highly permeable soil beneath
- Dry Well – Small pit filled with stone or gravel that receives and stores rooftop runoff to enable it to infiltrate into the underlying ground.

Figure 2.11.1 Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Infiltration Practice

Infiltration Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection focuses on the Drainage Area (IN1), Inlets (IN2), Infiltration Area (IN3), and Outlets (IN4). The purpose of an infiltration practice is to temporarily store collected runoff so that it can percolate into the underlying soil. Using this practice is dependent on having a good on-site soil that is capable of infiltrating the amount of runoff generated by the drainage area. The Level 1 Inspection should be conducted at least twice a year, especially in early spring, to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a significant amount of snow.

IN 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to and is uphill from the Infiltration cell. When it rains, water runs off and flows to the Infiltration cell and soaks into its underlying layers.

Instruction: Look for both pervious and impervious areas that are uphill from the Infiltration cell. Consult **Table 11.1.1** below.

Table 11.1.1 IN Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)		**Follow-Up Actions**
	☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to establish vegetation. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and seed and straw to get vegetation established. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths.
☐ For Dry Wells: Leaves, sticks, or other debris in gutters and downspouts		☐ Remove all debris by hand. ☐ Other:
	☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Other:
	☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances	☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous. ☐ Other:

IN 2. Inlets

Description: The inlets to an Infiltration practice are where water flows into the cell. Depending on the design, water can flow in through:

- *Curb cuts or openings* in a parking lot or roadway
- *Downspouts* that deliver runoff directly from a rooftop to the Infiltration practice
- *Pipes or ditches* that carry water into the Infiltration practice from the drainage area
- *Flow directly over the land surface* (known as “sheetflow”), sometimes across a strip of rock or stone

Instruction: Look for all the places where water flows into the Infiltration practice. Consult **Table 11.1.2** below for possible problems.

Table 11.1.2 IN Inlets

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Inlets are collecting grit and debris or grass/weeds are growing. Some water may not be getting into the Infiltration practice.	☐ Use a flat shovel to remove grit and debris (especially at curb inlets or openings). Parking lots generate fine grit that will accumulate at these spots. ☐ Pull out clumps of growing grass or weeds and scoop out the soil or grit that the plants are growing in. ☐ Remove any grass clippings, leaves, sticks, and other debris that is collecting at inlets. ☐ For pipes and ditches, remove sediment and debris that is partially blocking the pipe or ditch opening where it enters the Infiltration practice. ☐ Dispose of all material properly in an area where it will not re-enter the practice. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Inlets are blocked to the extent that most of the water does not seem to be entering the Infiltration practice.
☐ Some or all of the inlets are eroding so that rills, gullies, and other erosion is present, or there is bare dirt that is washing into the Infiltration practice.	☐ For small areas of erosion, smooth out the eroded part and apply rock or stone (e.g., river cobble) to prevent further erosion. Usually, filter fabric is placed under the rock or stone. ☐ In some cases, reseeding and applying erosion-control matting can be used to prevent further erosion. Some of these materials may be available at a garden center, but it may be best to consult a landscape contractor. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Erosion is occurring at most of the inlets and it looks like there is too much water that is concentrating at these points. The inlet design may have to be modified.

IN 3. Infiltration Area

Description: The infiltration area is the area that collects water and allows it to seep into the underlying soil. Some infiltration areas also have a vertical perforated pipe called an *observation well,* which is used to view the water level in the infiltration after a storm. If the infiltration area is working properly, the water in the observation well should be completely drained down within 2 to 3 days of a storm. Depending on the design, the infiltration area can be covered with grass, gravel, or stone.

Instruction: Examine the surface of the infiltration area and the observation well. Consult **Table 11.1.3** below for possible problems.

Table 11.1.3 IN Infiltration Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ For grass-covered Infiltration practices: grass has grown very tall, *Photo credit: Stormwater Maintenance, LLC*	☐ Mow infiltration area at least twice per year. ☐ Other:
 ☐ For grass-covered Infiltration practices: sparse vegetation cover or bare spots	☐ Add topsoil (as needed), grass seed, straw, and water during the growing season to re-establish consistent grass coverage. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sparse vegetation cover can be a sign that the infiltration area is not infiltrating at the proper rate and water is standing too long after a storm. The surface may be saturated or squishy, and the conditions do not enable grass to grow. This situation should be evaluated by a Level 2 Inspection and likely corrected by a qualified contractor.
☐ Minor areas of sediment, grit, trash, or other debris are accumulating on the surface.	☐ Use a shovel to scoop out minor areas of sediment or grit, especially in the spring after winter sanding materials may wash in and accumulate. Dispose of the material where it cannot re-enter the Infiltration practice. ☐ If removing the material creates a hole or low area, rake the surface smooth and level. ☐ Remove trash, debris, and other undesirable materials. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sediment has accumulated more than 2-inches deep and covers 25% or more of the surface of the Infiltration area.

Table 11.1.3 IN Infiltration Area	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
 ☐ There is erosion on the surface; water seems to be carving out rills as it flows across the Infiltration surface or sinkholes are forming in certain areas.	☐ For minor areas of erosion, try filling the eroded areas with clean topsoil, sand, or stone (whatever the existing cover is). ☐ If the problem recurs, you may have to use larger stone (e.g., river cobble) to fill in problem areas. ☐ Other: ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem persists or the erosion is more than 3-inches deep and seems to be an issue with how water enters and moves through the infiltration area. ☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem does not seem to be caused by flowing water but a collapse or sinking of the surface (e.g., “sinkhole”) due to some underground problem.
 ☐ Observation well is damaged or cap is missing	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Requires replacing pipes or caps.
 ☐ Water still visible in the observation well more than 72 hours after a rain storm. The Infiltration practice does not appear to be draining properly.	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This is generally a serious problem, and it will be necessary to activate a Level 2 Inspection.

IN 4. Outlets

Description: Outlets are where water exits the surface of the infiltration area during larger storms when the underground infiltration reservoir fills up and the water needs somewhere to go. Note that not all infiltration practices will have an identifiable outlet if the design is for all the water to infiltrate into the ground. Outlets may be a berm, stone weir, or perhaps an inlet or pipe.

Instruction: Locate and inspect all outlets. Consult **Table 2.11.4** below for possible problems.

Table 2.11.4 IN Outlets

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Outlet obstructed with sediment, debris, trash, etc.	☐ Remove the debris and dispose of it where it cannot re-enter the infiltration area. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Outlet is completely obstructed; there is too much material to remove by hand or with simple hand tools.
☐ Rills or gullies are forming at outlet.	☐ For minor rills, fill in with soil, compact, and seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Rills are more than 2" to 3" deep and require more than just hand raking and re-seeding.

2.12. Sand and Organic Filters

Components of Sand and Organic Filters

Key areas to inspect for these types of practices include the following:

- SF 1. Drainage Area
- SF 2. Inlets and Pre-treatment
- SF 3. Filter Area

Note: The category of Sand and Organic Filters includes:

- Surface Sand Filters – Surface sand filters (Figure 2.12.1) have a sand layer and often an underdrain layer beneath. Water comes in on the surface.
- Underground Sand Filters – Sand filters can also be in an underground vault or concrete trench in a parking lot or near a building. These are typically accessed through manholes or heavy grates.

Figure 2.12.1. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Sand and Organic Filters

- Underground Organic Filters – These are similar to underground sand filters but may also contain canisters of peat or other organic media that helps filter pollutants from runoff. These types of underground structures will be difficult for Level 1 Inspectors to inspect because they involve pulling off heavy manhole covers or grates. The Level 1 Inspection will focus on any evidence of clogging as observed from the surface.

Figure 2.12.2. Examples of underground filters: Left –Perimeter sand filter in a concrete box (photo shows the filter with the grate top off as the filter is being maintained). The right-hand side is a sedimentation chamber filled with water and the left-hand side is the sand filter chamber. Right –Underground vault filter with special organic filter media inside cartridges.

Sand and Organic Filter Level 1 Inspection

The Level 1 Inspection for Sand and Organic Filters focuses on the Drainage Area (SF1), Inlets (SF2), Filter Area (SF3). The purpose of a filter practice is to temporarily store collected runoff and have it percolate through a filter media, such as sand, that filters pollutants before the water goes downstream. Most filters have an underdrain system (perforated pipe in a gravel layer) to let the water out of the filter once the filtration takes place. The Level 1 Inspection should be conducted at least annually, especially in early spring, to ensure that the practice has survived the winter, particularly if there has been a significant amount of snow.

SF 1. Drainage Area

Description: The drainage area sends runoff to and is uphill from the filter.

Instruction: Look for both pervious and impervious areas that are uphill from the filter. Consult **Table 2.12.1** below.

Table 2.12.1 SF Drainage Area

Problem (Check if Present)	Follow-Up Actions
 ☐ Bare soil, erosion of the ground (rills washing out the dirt)	☐ Seed and straw areas of bare soil to get vegetation established. ☐ Fill in erosion areas with soil, compact, and seed and straw to establish vegetation. ☐ If a rill or small channel is forming, try to redirect water flowing to this area by creating a small berm or adding topsoil to areas that are heavily compacted. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Large areas of soil have been eroded, or larger channels are forming. May require rerouting of flow paths.
 ☐ Piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, salt, or other materials	☐ Remove or cover piles of grass clippings, mulch, dirt, etc. ☐ Other:
 ☐ Open containers of oil, grease, paint, or other substances	☐ Cover or properly dispose of materials; consult your local solid waste authority for guidance on materials that may be toxic or hazardous. ☐ Other:

SF 2. Inlets

Figure 2.12.3. Key Areas for Level 1 Inspection of Sand and Organic Filters

Description: The inlets to a filter are where water flows into the filter. Depending on the design, water can flow in through:

- Curb cuts or inlets in a parking lot or roadway
- Downspouts that deliver runoff directly from a rooftop to the filter
- Pipes or ditches that carry water into the filter from the drainage area
- Flow directly over the land surface (known as "sheetflow")

Above-ground filters can have any of the above. Underground filters most likely have curb inlets or flow directly into a grate that is part of the filter itself (see left-hand side of perimeter sand filter shown in **Figure 2.12.3**).

Instruction: Look for all the places where water flows into the filter practice. Consult **Table 2.12.2** below for possible problems.

Table 2.12.2 SF Inlets

Problem (Check if Present)		Follow-Up Actions
	☐ Inlets are collecting grit and debris or grass/weeds growing. Some water may not be getting into the filter practice.	☐ Use a flat shovel to remove grit and debris (especially at curb inlets or openings). Parking lots generate fine grit that accumulates at these spots. ☐ Pull out clumps of growing grass or weeds and scoop out the soil or grit that the plants are growing in. ☐ Remove any grass clippings, leaves, sticks, and other debris that is collecting at inlets. ☐ For pipes and ditches, remove sediment and debris that is partially blocking the pipe or ditch opening where it enters the Filter practice. ☐ Dispose of all material properly in an area where it will not re-enter the practice. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Inlets are blocked to the extent that most of the water does not seem to be entering the filter practice.
	☐ Some or all of the inlets are eroding so that rills, gullies, and other erosion are present, or there is bare dirt washing into the filter practice.	☐ For small areas of erosion, smooth out the eroded part and apply rock or stone (e.g., river cobble) to prevent further erosion. Usually, filter fabric is placed under the rock or stone. ☐ In some cases, reseeding and applying erosion-control matting can be used to prevent further erosion. Some of these materials may be available at a garden center, but it may be best to consult a landscape contractor. ☐ Other:
		☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Erosion is occurring at most of the inlets and it looks like there is too much water concentrating at these points. The inlet design may have to be modified.

Table 2.12.2 SF Inlets		
Problem (Check if Present)		**Follow-Up Actions**
	☐ For an underground filter, water is ponding and doesn't seem to be getting through the filter.	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This is generally a more serious problem and should be referred for a Level 2 Inspection because it will require opening up the filter vault to check for clogging.

SF 3. Filter Area (for Surface Sand Filters)

Description: The filter area is the area that collects water and allows it to seep into the filter media. Some filters also have a vertical perforated pipe that is the cleanout for the underdrain pipe.

Instruction: Examine the surface of the filter and the observation well, if present. Consult **Table 2.12.3** below for possible problems.

Table 2.12.3 SF Filter Area (for Surface Sand Filters)	
Problem (Check if Present)	**Follow-Up Actions**
 ☐ Filter has grass and vegetation growing on more than 25% of the filter bed, threatening to clog the filter.	☐ Vegetation growing in the filter bed should be removed either manually or with a water-safe herbicide (e.g., glysophate without surfactants). ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The filter seems clogged, or vegetation and weeds have proliferated past the point where the Level 1 person can manage it.
☐ Minor areas of sediment, grit, trash, or other debris are accumulating on the surface.	☐ Use a shovel to scoop out minor areas of sediment or grit, especially in the spring after winter sanding materials wash in and accumulate. Dispose of the material where it cannot re-enter the filter. ☐ If removing the material creates a hole or low area, rake the surface smooth and level. ☐ Remove trash, debris, and other undesirable materials. ☐ Other:
	☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: Sediment (other than sand) has accumulated more than 2-inches deep and covers 25% or more of the surface of the filter area.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Table 2.12.3 SF Filter Area (for Surface Sand Filters)</th></tr>
<tr><th>Problem (Check if Present)</th><th>Follow-Up Actions</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">
☐ There is erosion on the surface; water seems to be carving out rills as it flows across the filter surface, or sinkholes are forming in certain areas.</td><td>☐ For minor areas of erosion, try filling the eroded areas with clean, coarse construction sand.
☐ Other:</td></tr>
<tr><td>☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem persists or the erosion is more than 3-inches deep and seems to be an issue with how water enters and moves through the filter area.
☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: The problem does not seem to be caused by flowing water but by a collapse or sinking of the surface (e.g., “sinkhole”) due to some underground problem.</td></tr>
<tr><td>
☐ Water is still visible on the surface and/or the standpipe (if present) more than 72 hours after a rainstorm. The filter practice drains very slowly or is completely clogged.</td><td>☐ Kick-Out to Level 2 Inspection: This is generally a serious problem, and it will be necessary to activate a Level 2 Inspection.</td></tr>
</table>

Section 3. Level 2 and 3 Inspections

3.1. How to Use this Section

This section provides guidance for Level 2 and 3 inspections for 10 groups of stormwater management practices (SMPs). See Section 1 of this chapter for an explanation of the Maintenance Hierarchy approach.

- Section 3.2 provides general guidance for Level 2 and 3 inspections.
- Sections 3.3 through 3.12 provide detailed Level 2 and 3 inspection guidance for each of the 10 practice categories:
  - 3.3 Rainwater Harvesting
  - 3.4 Disconnection and Sheetflow
  - 3.5 Swales
  - 3.6 Tree Planting
  - 3.7 Bioretention
  - 3.8 Green Roofs
  - 3.9 Permeable Pavement
  - 3.10 Ponds and Wetlands
  - 3.11 Infiltration
  - 3.12 Sand and Organic Filters
- Each section has **tables** containing guidance for Level 2 inspectors on specific SMP conditions and possible repairs for those problems (in left column), as well as lists of conditions that would likely trigger a Level 3 evaluation or maintenance action (right column). In addition, **Appendix XX** contains detailed checklists for Level 2 inspectors to use in the field during their inspections.
- **Section 3.13** provides a BRIEF overview for Level 3 inspections and how these fit into the overall hierarchy. However, most of the content for Level 3 maintenance actions is contained in **Section 4. Appendix XX** includes an optional Level 3 inspection checklist that can be used for all SMPs. This checklist is more diagnostic in nature with regard to SMP performance issues and requires more training and base knowledge to use effectively.

3.2. General Guidance for Level 2 and 3 Inspections

The Level 2 inspection will typically be performed by a municipal employee or contractor with some training in stormwater operations and maintenance. Regardless of which type of practice is being inspected, some key procedures and equipment are necessary. Read through this guidance before going on an inspection, and use the specific guidance in **Sections 3.3 through 3.12** for the practice you are inspecting. While much of the equipment and general procedures are somewhat similar to Level 1 inspections, additional information is provided for Level 2 inspectors below.

When to Conduct a Level 2 Inspection

The Level 2 Inspection is needed for two reasons. First, routine inspections to comply with local stormwater regulations typically require a Level 2 inspector. In addition, a Level 2 inspection may be triggered to address or diagnose problems identified during a Level 1 inspection. In this situation, the Level 2 inspector should confer with the Level 1 inspector about problems they have identified and then conduct a follow-up inspection that focuses more on diagnosing the causes of the problems and possible solutions. The checklists in **Appendix XX** and other resources cited in **Sections 3.3 through 3.12** can be used as tools.

The frequency of this type of inspection may be defined by the municipality. As with Level 1 inspections, the frequency may change with the age of the SMP, with higher frequencies the first couple of years after installation. Well-established and well-maintained practices may only need to be inspected every few years.

Notifying the Responsible Party

Consult the plan file and maintenance agreement to ascertain the responsible party. Confirm that there is right of access through the local code, signed maintenance agreement, or other means. Contact the responsible party at least three business days in advance of the proposed inspection. If the responsible party cannot be found or contacted, make a reasonable effort through file research to contact a property representative, and document these efforts in writing. If the inspection is in response to a Level 1 inspection and referral to your agency, try to speak with the person who conducted the Level 1 inspection and get any documentation they may have. For publicly owned and managed SMPs, the responsible party will likely be the municipality or other regulated MS4.

What to Take in the Field

Level 2 inspections may require more measurement and, as a result, need some additional materials. In addition, the Level 2 inspection may involve gaining access to private property. Consequently, additional identification is needed for these inspections. A list of recommended items to take in the field is provided in **Table 2.2.1**.

Table 3.2.1 What to Take in the Field for a Level 2 Inspection
• Safety equipment: safety vest, steel-toe shoes, traffic cones if working near traffic, etc. • Approved plan and as-built (record drawing) if available • Records of previous inspections if available • Engineering scale • Hand level and pocket rod if needed to measure relative elevations • Digital camera • Several copies of SMP checklist if paper forms are used (**Appendix XX**) • Clipboard and pencils if paper forms are used • Dry erase white board and marker (optional) to include in photos to keep track of SMP tracking # in municipal database (see **Figure 3.2** as example) • Letter on municipal letterhead granting access and/or agency photo badge • Pipe wrench to open underdrain clean-out caps • Flashlight to look into underdrain cleanouts and/or manholes • Manhole puller • Soil probe or auger • 100' measuring tape • Shovel • Bug spray

Conducting the Inspection

In general, the inspection should follow a consistent, logical approach, such as outlined below.

- Conduct a quick tour of the practice to identify any obvious issues and important components: inlets (number, location), surface area, overflow structures, berms or impoundments, outfalls, downstream conveyance channels or receiving waters. Check these components against the design plan or as-built drawing (if available).
- Starting at the outlet or low point, use the checklists provided in Appendix XX to evaluate the practice. The inspection will proceed from the outlet or outfall to the stormwater treatment area, berms, side slopes, inlets, and drainage area. Make sure to fill in key information on the inspection form, such as SMP identifier number, site name, inspector name, date, and weather conditions.

Figure 3.2. A white board and digital camera can be handy to note SMP tracking #, date of inspection, and other forms of documentation. Note that an inspector may alternatively tag photographs, particularly if they are recorded on a smartphone or Tablet.

- Take photos of important components or maintenance concerns, and mark photo locations and direction on a sketch.
- Review the inspection form before leaving the site to make sure that all necessary information has been collected.

Follow-Up Actions

Immediate follow-up actions include entering the inspection information in the appropriate database or hard copy file, downloading and labeling photos, and providing other necessary documentation.

Another possible follow-up action would be to activate a Level 3 inspection in certain situations. The Level 2 inspector will have to make a judgement call as to whether observed problems warrant a Level 3 investigation, and will also have to coordinate with the responsible party to pursue such an investigation. The Level 2 guidance in this chapter summarizes follow-up actions associated with various observations of SMP condition. Note that these tables are divided into “Level 2” and “Triggers for Level 3” follow-up actions, with Level 2 actions in *blue* cells and Level 3 in *green* cells. Consult **Section 4** of this chapter for more guidance on how to diagnose and correct some of the maintenance items included in these tables.

Another follow-up action involves communicating problems and corrective measures to the responsible party (private or public). This may involve instructing the responsible party to undertake a Level 3 inspection or to provide a timeframe for correcting simpler issues that do not require Level 3 involvement. Many local programs have existing procedures for sending letters or activating a compliance procedure. These procedures include verifying that repairs and corrections are completed by the responsible party.

Level 3 Inspection Guidance

The Level 3 inspection is typically conducted by a certified individual such as a professional engineer or certified stormwater professional. It is assumed that the Level 3 inspector is knowledgeable about stormwater management, as well as some engineering or horticultural principles and general construction practices, or some SMP-specific details (e.g., plumbing contractor who has worked with rainwater harvesting systems). The Level 3 inspector will not typically be completing a full practice inspection. This inspection is conducted only in response to problems identified during the Level 2 inspection, is more diagnostic in nature, assumes a greater degree of initial knowledge, and may require more extensive intervention.

Appendix XX contains a comprehensive checklist for all types of practices intended more to diagnose SMP performance issues (as opposed to the more general Level 2 SMP-specific inspection forms in **Appendix XX**). This checklist can serve as a tool for the Level 3 investigator but is not necessary if the problem is obvious and just needs the Level 3 professional to identify causes and remedies. The checklist will guide the professional through various SMP components in a systematic fashion.

The Level 3 inspection is also more results based in that it will lead to a specific repair to address the issue that triggered the inspection. **Section 4** identifies 12 problems typically addressed in a Level 3 inspection and discusses measures to diagnose the cause of the problem, as well as repairs needed to address it. It should be noted that the problems addressed in each **Section 4** subsection can occur in a variety of SMPs (e.g., erosion is a common issue in almost every type of SMP). As a result, each subsection identifies the SMPs where the problem most commonly occurs and, in some cases, an SMP-specific diagnosis procedure.

3.3. Rainwater Harvesting – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Rainwater Harvesting practices are:

- Structural or mechanical problems (e.g., malfunction of the first-flush diverter or vortex filter)
- Accumulation of debris in the tank that cannot be easily removed by hand
- Severe erosion at the outlet

Table 3.3.1 Level 2 Inspection – RAINWATER HARVESTING

Recommended Repairs	Triggers for Level 3 Inspection
Observed Condition: Tank is not filling properly or water level drops quickly	
Condition 1: Tank is not filling properly Look for signs of water bypassing the tank. Inspect the conveyance system and filters to make sure that all parts are properly connected and not leaking. Observe the system during a rainstorm to make sure that water is not backing up and spilling out of the gutters or getting excessively diverted by the filter. Adjust angles and placement of filter as needed. Condition 2: Water level drops quickly after filling Requires diagnosis and resolution of problem: • Leaking valve or spigot? • Crack in tank wall? • Pump turning on unnecessarily?	• Gutters, pipes, and/or filter appear to be undersized or not properly designed. • Structural or mechanical problem requires special expertise in rainwater harvesting systems.
Observed Condition: Tank is sinking, leaning, or at risk of collapse	
Condition 1: Foundation is not stable This repair may need specialized equipment and skill, depending on the size and type of tank. For smaller tanks (like rain barrels), drain and disconnect the tank to move it aside. Compact the underlying soil and create a solid, level base for the tank with concrete blocks or gravel. Seek professional help for larger tanks. Condition 2: Other structural problem Seek professional help.	• Tanks cannot be easily adjusted or fixed by hand.
Observed Condition: Severe erosion at outlet	
Condition 1: Erosion gets worse even after re-seeding or adding stone There are several potential solutions to this continued erosion. Add geotextile fabric below the stone to protect the soil. Dig out a pit at the outfall and fill with gravel or stone to absorb the velocity of the water spilling out the tank. If the outlet flows onto a steep slope, consider extending the pipe length to a flatter area. Some of these actions may require help from a contractor.	• Erosion control cannot easily be installed by hand. • Erosion recurs after previous repairs. • Downstream drainage concerns

3.4. Disconnection & Sheet Flow – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Disconnection and Sheetflow practices are:

- Significant damage to level spreader/energy dissipator
- Major erosion

Table 3.4.1 Level 2 Inspection – DISCONNECTION AND SHEETFLOW	
Recommended Repairs	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Significant sediment on pavement that drains to disconnection area (e.g., grass strip)	
Condition 1: Sediment on parking lot is widespread Enlist a mechanical sweeper or vacuum sweeper to remove sediment across entire pavement surface. Pay special attention to downhill edges of pavement where more sediment may have accumulated.	• Sediment accumulation is so serious that it cannot be sufficiently removed with mechanical sweeper. May indicate a high sediment load from uphill in the drainage area that needs to be mitigated.
Observed Condition: Pavement edge deteriorating	
Condition 1: Dips or damage at pavement edge causing runoff to concentrate Determine whether the damaged edge is causing significant enough concentration of runoff to warrant repair or regrading of the pavement.	• Edge must be patched or re-paved to make secure and level. • Parking lot not draining properly to the energy dissipator and treatment area.
Observed Condition: Level spreader/energy dissipator	
Condition 1: Level spreader sinking or uneven If basic equipment can be used, prop up and secure any section of level spreader that is sinking. Regrade soil all around level spreader and add stone as necessary to prevent erosion and bypassing. Condition 2: Level spreader is broken These repairs can be simple for small, residential-scale practices, such as at a downspout. Ensure the level spreader is level across, keyed in to soil at the edges, and made of durable material that can withstand the flow of water running across it. Larger or more complicated level spreaders (e.g., concrete) will likely require specialized skill and equipment.	• Level spreader requires specialized equipment, regrading, or large amount of material to make level again. • Level spreader needs to be re-designed and replaced.
Observed Condition: Erosion in treatment area	
Condition 1: Rills from concentrated flow Inspect energy dissipator to see whether it needs to be improved to better spread out incoming flow. Regrade flow path to ensure that it is relatively flat (if minor). If major re-grading is needed, the treatment area may need to be redesigned and fixed with specialized equipment.	• Major rills and gullies • Treatment area needs to be re-designed and major grading needed.

3.5. Swales – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Swales are:

- Standing water, swale not draining properly (not applicable to wet swales)
- Severe erosion around or under check dams
- Large area of vegetation overrun with weeds and/or invasive species
- Severe erosion at outlet that requires redesign

Table 3.5.1 Level 2 Inspection: SWALE

Recommended Repairs	Triggers for Level 3 Inspection
Observed Condition: Water Stands on Surface for More than 72 Hours after Storm	
Condition 1: Small pockets of standing water Use a soil probe or auger to examine the soil profile. If isolated areas have accumulated grit, fines, or vegetative debris or have compacted soil, try scraping off top 3 to 6 inches of soil and replacing with clean material. Also check to see that surface is level and water is not ponding selectively in certain areas. Condition 2: Standing water is widespread or covers entire surface Requires diagnosis and resolution of problem: Bad or compacted soil Filter fabric on the swale bottom Too much sediment/grit washing in from drainage area? Too much ponding depth? Longitudinal slope is too flat?	• Soil is overly compacted or clogged and problem is not evident from Level 2 inspection. • Level 2 inspection identifies problem, but it cannot be resolved easily or is associated with the original design of the practice (e.g., not enough slope down through the swale).
Observed Condition: Vegetation is predominantly weeds and invasive species	
For a small area, weed and dig up invasive plants. Replant with natives or plants from original planting plan. If longer than 100 feet, then need to develop a new planting plan and should have a professional review.	• Vegetation has severe deviation from original planting plan; swale has been neglected and suffered from deferred maintenance. • Owner/responsible party has no idea how to maintain the practice. • For large area, hire a professional to develop a grading plan and develop a planting plan.

Observed Condition: Severe erosion of check dams, inlets, swale bottom, or side slopes	
Condition 1: Erosion at inlets The lining (e.g., grass, matting, stone, rock) may not be adequate for the actual flow velocities coming through the inlets. First line of defense is to try a more non-erosive lining and/or extend the lining further down into the swale. If problem persists, analysis by a design professional is warranted. Condition 2: Erosion of check dams Inspect upstream and downstream of check dams for evidence of undercutting or erosion, and remove trash or blockages at weep holes (in timber check dams). Ensure that the center of check dams is lower than the edges and that the edges are keyed into the swale side slopes. Rework check dam material or repair as needed, making sure the finished check dam is level from side to side. Condition 3: Erosion of swale bottom For small areas, fill with topsoil, compact, and reseed and mulch to establish vegetation. If the problem is more chronic, analyze where the water is concentrating and try to spread it out across the entire swale bottom through minor regrading. Condition 4: Erosion along side slopes The issue is likely linked with unanticipated flow paths down the side slopes (likely overland flow that concentrates as it hits the edge of the slope). For small or isolated areas, try filling, compacting, and re-establishing healthy ground cover vegetation. If the problem is more widespread, further analysis is required to redirect the flow.	• Erosion (rills, gullies) is more than 12-inches deep at inlets or the swale bottom or more than 3-inches deep on side slopes. • Flow paths from the drainage area are higher than expected, such that the swale needs to be redesigned to handle higher flow rates and velocities.
Observed Condition: Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment	
Condition 1: Isolated areas of sediment accumulation, generally less than 3-inches deep Sediment source may be from a one-time or isolated event. Remove accumulated sediment and top 2 to 3 inches of swale soil media; replace with clean material. Check drainage area for any ongoing sources of sediment. Condition 2: Majority of the surface is caked with "hard pan" (thin layer of clogging material) or accumulated sediment that is 3-inches deep or more This can be caused by improper construction sequence (drainage area not fully stabilized prior to installation of the swale) or another chronic source of sediment in the drainage area. Augering several holes down along the swale can indicate how severe the problem is; often the damage is confined to the first several inches of soil. Removing and replacing this top layer (or to the depth where sediment incursion is seen in auger holes) can be adequate, as long the problem does not recur.	• More than 2 inches of accumulated sediment cover 25% or more of the swale surface area. • "Hard pan" of thin, crusty layer covers majority of swale surface area and seems to be impeding flow of water along the swale. • New sources of sediment seem to be accumulating with each significant rainfall event.

3.6. Tree Planting – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

A Level 2 Tree Planting inspection should be conducted periodically during the growing season by the Cooperative Extension or an arborist.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Table 3.6.1 Level 2 Inspection: TREE PLANTING</th></tr>
<tr><th>Recommended Repairs</th><th>Triggers for Level 3 Inspection</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Observed Condition: Appearance of fungus or pest damage</td></tr>
<tr><td>Condition 1: Fungus, discoloration, browning leaves or holes in leaves

Check with arborist or other tree professional about the best way to proceed. This requires a Level 3 inspection.

Condition 2: Burrowing insects, holes

Check with arborist or other tree professional about the best way to proceed. This requires a Level 3 inspection.</td><td>• Any concerns about how to address infestation or disease</td></tr>
</table>

3.7. Bioretention – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Bioretention are:

- Standing water, clogged media
- Vegetation management
- Bioretention does not conform to original design plan in surface area or storage.
- Severe erosion of filter bed, inlets, or around outlets
- Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Table 3.7.1 Level 2 Inspection: BIORETENTION
NOTE: Key Source for this Information (CSN, 2013)</th></tr>
<tr><th>Recommended Repairs</th><th>Triggers for Level 3 Inspection</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Observed Condition: Water Stands on Surface for More than 72 Hours after Storm</td></tr>
<tr><td>Condition 1: Small pockets of standing water

Use a soil probe or auger to examine the soil profile. If isolated areas have accumulated grit, fines, or vegetative debris or have bad soil media, try scraping off top 3 inches of media and replacing with clean material. Also check to see that surface is level and water is not ponding selectively in certain areas.

Condition 2: Standing water is widespread or covers entire surface

Requires diagnosis and resolution of problem:
• Clogged underdrain?
• Filter fabric between soil media and underdrain stone?
• Need to install underdrain if not present?
• Too much sediment/grit washing in from drainage area?
• Too much ponding depth?
• Improper soil media?</td><td>• Soil media is clogged and problem is not evident from Level 2 inspection.
• Level 2 inspection identifies problem, but it cannot be resolved easily or is associated with the original design of the practice.</td></tr>
</table>

Observed Condition: Vegetation is sparse or out of control	
Condition 1: Original design planting plan seems good but has not been maintained, so there are many invasives and/or dead plants Will require some horticultural experience to restore vegetation to intended condition by weeding, pruning, removing plants, and adding new plants. Condition 2: Original design planting plan is unknown or cannot be actualized A landscape designer or horticulturalist will be needed to redo the planting plan. Will likely require analysis of soil pH, moisture, organic content, sun/shade, and other conditions to make sure plants match conditions. Plan should include invasive plant management and maintenance plan to include mulching, watering, disease intervention, periodic thinning/pruning, etc.	• Vegetation has severe deviation from original planting plan; Bioretention has been neglected and suffered from deferred maintenance. • Owner/responsible party has no idea how to maintain the practice.
Observed Condition: Bioretention does not conform to original design plan in surface area or storage	
Condition 1: Level 2 Inspection reveals that practice is too small based on design dimension, does not have adequate storage (e.g., ponding depth) based on the plan, and/or does not treat the drainage area runoff as indicated on the plan Small areas of deviation can be corrected by the property owner or responsible party, but it is likely that a design professional will have to revisit the design and attempt a redesign that meets original objectives or that can be resubmitted to the municipality for approval.	• More than a 25% departure from the approved plan in surface area, storage, or drainage area; sometimes less than this threshold at the discretion of the Level 2 inspector.
Observed Condition: Severe erosion of filter bed, inlets, or around outlets	
Condition 1: Erosion at inlets The lining (e.g., grass, matting, stone, rock) may not be adequate for the actual flow velocities coming through the inlets. First line of defense is to try a more non-erosive lining and/or to extend the lining further down to where inlet slopes meet the Bioretention surface. If problem persists, analysis by a design professional is warranted. Condition 2: Erosion of Bioretention filter bed This is often caused by "preferential flow paths" through and along the Bioretention surface. The source of flow should be analyzed and methods employed to dissipate energy and disperse the flow (e.g., check dams, rock splash pads). Condition 3: Erosion on side slopes Again, the issue is likely linked with unanticipated flow paths down the side slopes (probably overland flow that concentrates as it hits the edge of the slope). For small or isolated areas, try filling, compacting, and re-establishing healthy ground cover vegetation. If the problem is more widespread, further analysis is required to redirect the flow.	• Erosion (rills, gullies) is more than 12 inches deep at inlets or the filter bed or more than 3 inches deep on side slopes. • If the issue is not caused by moving water but some sort of subsurface defect. This may manifest as a sinkhole or linear depression and be associated with problems with the underdrain stone or pipe or underlying soil.
Observed Condition: Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment	
Condition 1: Isolated areas of sediment accumulation, generally less than 3-inches deep Sediment source may be from a one-time or isolated event. Remove accumulated sediment and top 2 to 3 inches of Bioretention soil media; replace with clean material. Check drainage area for any ongoing sources of sediment. Condition 2: Majority of the surface is caked with "hard pan" (thin layer of clogging material) or accumulated sediment that is 3-inches deep or more This can be caused by improper construction sequence (drainage area not fully stabilized prior to installation of Bioretention soil media) or another chronic source of sediment in the drainage area. Augering several holes down through the media can indicate how severe the problem is; often the damage is confined to the first several inches of soil media. Removing and replacing this top layer (or to the depth where sediment incursion is seen in auger holes) can be adequate, as long as the problem does not recur.	• More than 2 inches of accumulated sediment cover 25% or more of the Bioretention surface area. • "Hard pan" of thin, crusty layer covers majority of Bioretention surface area and seems to be impeding flow of water down through the soil media. • New sources of sediment seem to be accumulating with each significant rainfall event.

3.8. Green Roof – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Green Roofs are:

- Standing water
- Vegetation management
- Structural damage

Table 3.8.1 Level 2 Inspection: GREEN ROOF	
Recommended Repairs and Required Skills	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Unhealthy or Dying Vegetation	
Condition 1: Large number of plants dying from wilt If this is a one-time occurrence, review weather and landscaping records to see whether the dieoff seems reasonable. If so, deeply water immediately, and plant reinforcements in the spring. Condition 2: Vegetation is dying and yellowing For yellowing vegetation, consider testing the media for pH, nutrient levels, and other factors that may affect growth. Problems identified would go to a Level 3 specialist (see note to right).	• More than 25% dieoff • Plants are unhealthy for a prolonged period of time or need to be replanted repeatedly, indicating that a new planting plan may be necessary, or the planting medium is not functioning properly. • pH or other media constituents are not conducive to plant growth, and the media needs to be amended (e.g., lime, fertilizer). This should be handled by a green roof vendor or green roof plant specialist.
Observed Condition: Ponding Between Storm Events or Debris Accumulation	
Condition 1: Further inspection shows debris is clogging the outflow drainpipe Remove debris by hand and revisit within 24 hours to see whether this action fixed the problem. Condition 2: Debris has backed up to include the underdrain Attempt to remove by hand or flush out with a hose.	• Ponding continues even after debris has been removed. This may indicate a problem with either the media or the underdrain system.
Observed Condition: Structural Damage to Overflows	
Condition: If the damage is minor, repair damage directly, per original design drawings	• Most instances of structural damage will need to be referred to the designer or a qualified green roof vendor.
Observed Condition: Roof is Leaking or indication that the membrane has a leak	
Condition: Roof is leaking	• Any leaks in the membrane trigger a Level 3 inspection or an inspection by the original installer or designer.

3.9. Permeable Pavement – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Permeable Pavement are:

- Ponding or
- Highly clogged pavement

Table 3.9.1 Level 2 Inspection: PERMEABLE PAVEMENT	
Recommended Repairs and Required Skills	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Bare Soil or Erosion in the Drainage Area	
Condition 1: Extensive problem spots, but no channels or rills forming Reseed problem areas. If problem persists or grass does not take, consider hiring a landscape contractor. Condition 2: Problem is extensive, and rills/channels are beginning to form May be necessary to divert or redirect water that is causing the erosion problem. If it appears that simple regrading—such as installing a berm or leveling a low spot–will fix the problem, make repairs and check to ensure that the problem is repaired after the next storm.	• Large rills or gullies are forming in the drainage area. • An attempt to regrade the drainage area has been unsuccessful • Fixing the problem would require major regrading (i.e., redirecting more than a 100-square-foot area. • It is not clear why the problem is occurring.
Observed Condition: Dirt or Grit Accumulating, or Grass Growing on Pavement Surface	
Condition 1: Grit beginning to form but is isolated to a small area or does not fill the joints between paver blocks Try to agitate and sweep by hand, or hire a contractor with a vacuum sweeper. Also investigate the drainage area for potential sediment sources. If no obvious sources are found, discuss winter sanding and salting operations with the property owner to identify whether this could be the source. Condition 2: Grit is forming and cannot be removed with agitation and hand sweeping Hire a vendor with a regenerative air vacuum sweeper, maximum power 2,500 rpm; avoid sweepers that use water.	• More than 2 inches of sand/dirt/grit are on some of the pavement surface. • More than 25% of the pavement surface is covered with sand/dirt/grit to the extent that joints between paver blocks are filled. • Regenerative air sweeper cannot remove grit.
Observed Condition: Structural Damage	
Condition 1: Portions of porous asphalt or permeable pavers are damaged, and the cause is known to be at the surface. If the damage is from a single event such as heavy equipment or heavy fallen objects, or the surface has been damaged by wear over time, hire a contractor experienced in permeable pavement installation to repair the damaged areas. Condition 2: Damage to other structures, such as drainage infrastructure If possible, repair or replace damaged items, or hire a contractor with permeable pavement experience if the damaged infrastructure is within the pavement surface.	• More than 25% of the surface needs to be repaired or replaced. • It appears that the underlying material has “caved in,” indicating an underlying water conveyance or soil stabilization issue. • Problem is repaired but recurs within less than five years.

Table 3.9.1 Level 2 Inspection: PERMEABLE PAVEMENT	
Recommended Repairs and Required Skills	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Ponding on the Pavement Surface	
Condition 1: Underdrains (if present) may be clogged Check to see whether underdrains are clogged by inspecting cleanouts (if present) or catch basins and looking for debris. If underdrains appear clogged, it may be necessary to hire a router service to ream out the underdrains. Condition 2: At time of Level 2 inspection, water is not ponded, and there is no obvious clogging of the surface. Conduct a flood test to determine whether the ponding is an ongoing problem.	• Water stands on the pavement surface more than 72 hours after a storm, and the problem cannot be resolved by unclogging underdrains. • More than 25% of the pavement surface is covered with sand/dirt/grit to the extent that joints between paver blocks are filled.

Figure 3.9.1. Winter salting, sanding, plowing, and snow storage can cause problems for permeable pavement surfaces, which will trigger a Level 3 investigation.

Figure 3.9.2. A Level 3 investigation is warranted if more than 25% of the permeable pavement surface appears to be clogged, or joints are filled in, or, as shown in the photo, vegetation is growing.

3.10. Ponds & Wetlands – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Ponds and Wetlands are:

- Severe erosion
- Excessive algae or aquatic plants
- Settlement and pipe corrosion
- Major sediment buildup

Table 3.10.1 Level Inspection: PONDS and WETLANDS	
Recommended Repairs and Required Skills	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Bare Soil or Erosion in the Drainage Area	
Condition 1: Extensive problem spots, but no channels or rills forming Reseed problem areas. If problem persists or grass does not take, consider hiring a landscape contractor. Condition 2: Problem is extensive, and rills/channels are beginning to form May be necessary to divert or redirect water that is causing the erosion problem. If it appears that simple regrading—such as installing a berm or leveling a low spot–will fix the problem, make repairs and ensure that the problem is repaired after the next storm.	• Large rills or gullies are forming in the drainage area. • An attempt to regrade the drainage area has been unsuccessful. • Fixing the problem would require major regrading (i.e., redirecting more than a 100-square-foot area. • It is not clear why the problem is occurring.
Observed Condition: Manholes or Inlet Pipe Buried or Covered with Vegetation	
Condition 1: Nearest manhole and inlet pipe not found Consult as-built drawings to get to closest suspected location and use metal detector to search for metal manhole cover. If unsuccessful, identify nearest drain inlets and approximate pipe direction to locate next manhole. Condition 2: Manhole located and inspected Never enter a manhole, except by following confined-space entry protocols. If outlet pipe is not visible or greater than 25% full of sediment/debris or trash, it will typically require a qualified contractor to flush, clean and clear blockages. Condition 3: Inlet pipe not found at pond Clear vegetation and brush that may be covering the inlet pipe. Buried inlet pipes may be found through use of a metal probe. Condition 4: Inlet pipe buried in sediment or blocked by vegetation Once located, the pipe path can be cleared of vegetation with brush hook or other brush tools. Light digging may clear sediment from the end of the pipe.	• To locate buried manholes and lost storm lines, it is sometimes necessary to hire a pipeline inspection contractor with televising equipment or ground-penetrating radar and enter at the closest upstream access point. • Locating a buried inlet pipe may require wading in the edge of the pond and using a metal probe and brush axe to find and expose the pipe. • If other than light digging is necessary to remove accumulated sediment, a contractor with heavy equipment may be required.

Table 3.10.1 Level Inspection: PONDS and WETLANDS	
Recommended Repairs and Required Skills	**Triggers for Level 3 Inspection**
Observed Condition: Pipe or Headwall Settlement, Erosion, Corrosion or Failure	
Condition 1: Pipe or headwall settlement or failure Severe sinkholes, settlement or corrosion should be kicked out to Level 3 Inspection. Condition 2: Flow not confined to pipe and visible outside pipe wall With flashlight, observe inside of pipe and make notes of this condition with photographs. Look for sinkholes developing that indicate pipe failure beneath the surface. Kick out to Level 3 inspection.	• Where blockages are visible, a decision is needed on whether to clear them or leave in place. If a third of the pipe is full of sediment, it should be removed by a contractor with pipe-cleaning equipment. • Corrosion of inlet pipes that allows flow around the pipe exterior is a structural concern because it can lead to settlement, sinkholes and undermining pond embankment. Evidence of this type of failure may require specialized pipe-inspection equipment and investigation by an engineer.
Observed Condition: Pond Conditions	
Condition 1: Pond pre-treatment zone is full of sediment or not constructed as shown on as-built drawings. Condition 2: Excessive buildup of sediment or overgrowth If the pre-treatment area or pond pool is overgrown or filled with sediment so that the original design is compromised, corrective measures are required. If plants have died, then replanting is necessary. If none of the original design exists due to alteration or sediment, kick out to Level 3 inspection.	• It may require inspection by an engineer to determine next steps for clearing, replanting or reconstruction. • Erosion or settlement such that design has been compromised should be reviewed by an engineer. Recurring erosion may require redesign and/or regrading to direct flow away from eroding area. • If sediment has filled more than 50% of the pond's capacity, dredging is likely needed and should be evaluated by a qualified contractor. • Remove or control of excessive algae or aquatic plants can be assessed by a qualified pond maintenance company.

3.11. Infiltration – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Infiltration practices are:

- Standing water, clogged media
- Severe erosion of infiltration area, inlets, or around outlets
- Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment

Table 3.11.1 Level Inspection: INFILTRATION

Recommended Repairs	Triggers for Level 3 Inspection
Observed Condition: Water Stands on Surface for More than 72 Hours after Storm	
Condition 1: Small pockets of standing water For infiltration basins with soil, use a soil probe or auger to examine the soil profile. For gravel infiltration trenches or basins, use a shovel to dig into the gravel layer where the problem is occurring. If isolated areas have accumulated grit, fine silt, or vegetative debris or have bad soil or clogged gravel, try removing and replacing with clean material. If the practice is supposed to have grass cover, it will likely be necessary to replant once the problem is resolved. Condition 2: Standing water is widespread or covers entire surface Look in the observation well (if it exists) and use a tape measure to estimate the depth of water standing in the soil or gravel. Requires diagnosis and resolution of problem: • Too much sediment/grit washing in from drainage area? • Too much ponding depth? • Improper infiltration media? • Underlying soil not suitable for infiltration? As above, the resolution will likely require replanting and re-establishment of good grass cover if this is part of the design.	• Infiltration media is clogged and problem cannot be diagnosed from Level 2 inspection. • Level 2 inspection identifies problem, but it cannot be resolved easily or is associated with the original design of the practice.
Observed Condition: Severe erosion of infiltration bed, inlets, or around outlets	
Condition 1: Erosion at inlets The lining (e.g., grass, matting, stone, rock) may not be adequate for the actual flow velocities coming through the inlets. First line of defense is to try a more non-erosive lining and/or extending the lining further down to where inlet slopes meet the infiltration surface. If problem persists, analysis by a design professional is warranted. Condition 2: Erosion of infiltration bed This is often caused by “preferential flow paths” along the surface. The source of flow should be analyzed and methods employed to dissipate energy and disperse the flow (e.g., check dams, rock splash pads).	• Erosion (rills, gullies) is more than 12 inches deep • The issue is not caused by moving water but some sort of subsurface defect, which may manifest as a sinkhole or linear depression and be associated with problems with the underlying stone or soil.

Observed Condition: Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment	
Condition 1: Isolated areas of sediment accumulation, generally less than 3-inches deep Sediment source may be from a one-time or isolated event. For practices with soil cover, remove accumulated sediment and top 2 to 3 inches of soil; replace with clean material. Check drainage area for any ongoing sources of sediment. Condition 2: Majority of the surface is caked with "hard pan" (thin layer of clogging material) or accumulated sediment that is 3-inches deep or more This can be caused by improper construction sequence (drainage area not fully stabilized prior to installation of infiltration practice) or another chronic source of sediment in the drainage area. For infiltration basins with soil, augering several holes down through the media can indicate how severe the problem is; often the damage is confined to the first several inches of soil media. Removing and replacing this top layer (or to the depth where sediment incursion is seen in auger holes) can be adequate, as long the problem does not recur.	• Trenches or dry wells with stone or gravel at surface may need to be cleaned out with a vacuum truck because the process of removing the top layer of stone may cause fine silt to drop further down. • More than 2 inches of accumulated sediment cover 25% or more of the infiltration surface area. • "Hard pan" of thin, crusty layer covers majority of Infiltration surface area and seems to be impeding flow of water down through the soil media. • New sources of sediment seem to be accumulating with each significant rainfall event.

3.12. Sand and Organic Filters – Level 2 Inspections and Triggers for Level 3

The most likely triggers for a Level 3 Inspection for Sand and Organic Filters are:

- Standing water, clogged filter media
- Need to pump out sedimentation chamber
- Response to fuel or other spills that make it into the filter

Table 3.12.1 Level 2 Inspection: SAND AND ORGANIC FILTERS

Recommended Repairs	Triggers for Level 3 Inspection
Observed Condition: Water Stands on Surface for More than 72 Hours after Storm	
Condition 1: Small pockets of standing water Use a soil probe or auger to examine the sand or filter profile. If isolated areas have accumulated grit, fine silt, vegetative debris, oily sludge or bad sand media, try scraping off top 3 inches of media and replacing with clean, coarse construction sand. Condition 2: Standing water is widespread or covers entire surface Look in the underdrain cleanout (if present) and use a tape measure to estimate the depth of water standing in the sand layer. Requires diagnosis and resolution of problem: • Clogged underdrain • Filter fabric between the sand layer and underdrain gravel OR on top of the sand filter layer (usually held in place by a thin layer of gravel) • Too much sediment/grit/vegetative debris/oily sludge washing in from drainage area • Too much ponding depth • Improper sand media	• Sand or organic media is clogged, but problem was not evident from Level 2 inspection. • Level 2 inspection identifies problem, but it cannot be resolved easily or is associated with the original design of the practice. • The problem seems to be filter fabric placement, but this is specified in the original design. • The entire filter media layer or filter cartridges need to be replaced. • The problem is associated with improper configuration of underdrain pipes or outlet structures.

Observed Condition: Severe erosion of filter bed, inlets, or around outlets	
Condition 1: Erosion at inlets (surface sand filters) The lining (e.g., grass, matting, stone, rock) may not be adequate for the actual flow velocities coming through the inlets. First line of defense is to try a more non-erosive lining and/or extend the lining further down to where inlet slopes meet the filter surface. If problem persists, analysis by a design professional is warranted. Condition 2: Erosion of filter bed (surface sand filters) This is often caused by "preferential flow paths" along the surface. The source of flow should be analyzed and methods employed to dissipate energy and disperse the flow (e.g., check dams, rock splash pads).	• Erosion (rills, gullies) is more than 12 inches deep. • The issue is not caused by moving water but some sort of subsurface defect, which may manifest as a sinkhole or linear depression and be associated with problems with the underlying stone or soil.
Observed Condition: Significant sediment accumulation, indicating an uncontrolled source of sediment	
Condition 1: Isolated areas of sediment accumulation, generally less than 3-inches deep Sediment source may be from a one-time or isolated event. Remove accumulated sediment and top 2 to 3 inches of sand or filter media; replace with clean material. Check drainage area for any ongoing sources of sediment. Condition 2: Majority of the surface is caked with "hard pan" (thin layer of clogging material) or accumulated sediment that is 3-inches deep or more This can be caused by improper construction sequence (drainage area not fully stabilized prior to installation of filter practice) or another chronic source of sediment in the drainage area. Augering several holes down through the sand media can indicate how severe the problem is; often the damage is confined to the first several inches of media. Removing and replacing this top layer (or to the depth where sediment incursion is seen in auger holes) can be adequate, as long the problem does not recur.	• More than 2 inches of accumulated sediment cover 25% or more of the filter surface area. • "Hard pan" of thin, crusty layer covers majority of filter surface area that seems to be impeding flow of water down through the filter media. • New sources of sediment seem to be accumulating with each significant rainfall event.
Observed Condition: Underground vault system has standing water and oily sludge floating on top, or other issues that indicate clogging, malfunction, or need for maintenance	
Condition: Compare observation to the design or as-built plans to see whether existing conditions match the plan details.	• This condition will almost always warrant conferring with the manufacturer or vendor and/or using the Level 3 inspection process to further diagnose the problem.

Section 4. Diagnostics and Maintenance Measures

4.1. About this Section

Section 4 summarizes the most common problems found in SMPs, as well as typical maintenance or repair solutions. The guidance provided in this section has some similarities to **Section 3** but differs in the following ways:

1. The primary audience for Section 4 is the Level 3 individual, often a contractor, professional engineer, or landscape architect tasked with diagnosing and repairing SMPs that are not working properly. However, the information in Section 4 may also be quite useful for a Level 2 inspector seeking to diagnose a particular problem.
2. The maintenance measures described in this section are more detailed and focus on repairs to specific problems rather than on routine maintenance such as weeding or minor sediment removal.
3. Because the problems described in this section can be applied to several different practices, this section is organized by the type of problem rather than the practice type.

Problems addressed during Level 3 inspection/maintenance are summarized in **Table 4.1**. This list is not exhaustive but does address the most common issues in the SMPs that require some advanced knowledge and skill to inspect and fix. Each problem category is discussed in a separate sub-section.

Table 4.1: Common Inspection/Maintenance Issues for Level 3

Sub-Section/Category	Description
4.2 Contributing Drainage Area – Pollutant Sources	Sediment or pollution sources in the Drainage Area
4.3 Physical Obstructions	Physical obstructions to maintenance access, overflow, or emergency spillway
4.4 Erosion	Erosion on side slopes, practice bottom, at inlet or outlets. Rills and gullies forming where there should be sheetflow
4.5 Departures from Design Dimensions	Practice dimensions have been altered, either due to filling with sediment, redesign or filling in, or improper implementation.
4.6 Improper Flow Pathways	Flow is shortcircuiting the practice, or drainage pathways have been otherwise modified.
4.7 Sediment Buildup	Sediment has accumulated in a pool, practice bottom, pre-treatment area, or vault.
4.8 Clogging	The soil media or other components are clogged, and there may be standing water for longer than intended.
4.9 Vegetation	Excessive, inadequate, and/or unhealthy vegetation to support a practice
4.10 Embankment and Overflow Condition	Issues with an embankment or overflow weir or channel
4.11 Structural Damage	SMP infrastructure, such as concrete or metal elements, have been damaged.
4.12 Pool Stability	Permanent pool of water is at the improper elevation.
4.13 Pool Quality	Permanent pool of water suffers from poor quality due to algal growth or other issues.

4.2. Contributing Drainage Area – Pollutant Sources

Issue applies most commonly to: Sheetflow/Disconnection, Swales, Bioretention, Permeable Pavement, Ponds/Wetlands, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters.

Problem #1: Bare soil washing into SMP from drainage area

General Approach for All Practices:

- Identify the specific source(s) of sediment in the drainage area by tracking sediment flow during a rainfall or looking for a track of sediment staining during dry weather.
- For an active sedimentation event, attempt to filter incoming runoff if conditions allow (e.g., enough space upstream of the practice for temporary ponding). Consider installing a silt fence, silt socks (at curb inlets), staked straw bales, or other filtering material at the inlets of the SMP. This will keep at least some of the sediment from getting into the practice.
- Any runoff from active construction should not enter the SMP at all; divert to a temporary and approved sediment control practice.
- For areas of bare soil *not* due to active construction **(bottom photo)**, prep the soil and re-seed/plant with grass species or other thick ground cover appropriate for the region. May also need starter fertilizer, topsoil, and/or compost.
- For steep slopes with bare soil, consider also installing erosion-control matting to hold soil, seed, and straw in place until the vegetation becomes well established.
- For fill and topsoil stockpiles in the drainage area, provide temporary or permanent cover as possible. Alternatively, prevent runoff from the pile by surrounding it with silt fence at the base.

Helpful Skills:

- Erosion and sediment control knowledge and skills
- Landscaping knowledge to understand appropriate ground cover species for re-vegetating bare areas

Equipment Typically Used for Fixing Sediment Sources:

- Silt fencing and other sediment barriers
- Erosion-control matting and/or straw
- Rakes and shovels
- Light excavation or grading equipment for larger jobs
- Equipment to deliver topsoil or compost as needed
- Plants and/or seed mix, plus a way to move and store plant stock without damaging it or drying it out
- Starter fertilizer, topsoil, and/or compost

Problem #2: Other pollution sources in the drainage area

General Approach for All Practices:

- Pollutants may include: road salt, oils, fuels, food grease, wash water, paints and solvents, trash, and many others.
- Identify the source(s) of pollution.
- For pollutants spilled on the ground, remove by hand or use absorbents to soak up wet material.
- For materials stored outside, move them to a covered area or build/add cover over the materials. Provide secondary containment, if possible.
- Make sure all waste containers have lids and fix any leaks (**see bad practices in photo at right**).
- For sites prone to frequent oil leaks and staining (e.g., vehicle maintenance yards), consider installing an oil/water separator to pre-treat runoff that enters the SMP.
- For routine dumping of wash water, grease, paints, or other pollutants, enforce behavior change and explain good housekeeping practices.
- Develop a pollution prevention plan for the site to ensure that hazardous materials and other potential pollutants are not stored where they are exposed to rainfall.

Helpful Skills:

- Knowledge of good housekeeping and pollution prevention practices
- Good communication with employees and managers at site (e.g., for correcting bad site operations)

Equipment Typically Used for Correcting Other Pollutant Sources:

- Tarps to cover stockpiles
- Absorbents to soak up spills
- Secondary containment barriers that will hold back any liquids or solids that may leak out of their primary container
- Storage barns, sheds, pole barns and other permanent cover for potential pollutants

4.3. Physical Obstructions

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Rainwater Harvesting, Sheetflow/Disconnection, Swales, Bioretention, Green Roofs, Ponds/Wetlands, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters

Problem #1: Maintenance access is obstructed

Ground-Level SMPs:

- Where a path for vehicles and construction equipment to access the practice was established during construction but is now overgrown, remove woody vegetation and any other tall vegetation. This path should be bush hogged once or twice a year.
- If the SMP needs a large quantity of trash and/or sediment removed in areas where access is limited due to steep grades, overgrown vegetation, etc., it will be necessary to establish safe vehicular access by clearing and possibly re-grading the area. It is advisable to have a maintained, all-weather surface to critical parts of the SMP.
- It is most important to provide access nearest to parts of the practice where sediment and trash tend to accumulate the most: forebay and riser structure.
- For an SMP blocked by fences **(photo at right)**, install a gate that is wide enough for vehicles to enter for any current or future maintenance.
- Sometimes access is blocked by unauthorized structures, such as sheds, property fences, retaining walls, etc. Confer with the local stormwater authority on the presence of any maintenance easements and means to gain access to the practice.
- The solutions above should also provide for safe foot access for routine inspection and maintenance.

Rainwater Harvesting:

- Ensure that no structures are covering the filter or the tank's access/inspection port.

Green Roofs

- Ensure that individuals can safely reach the roof with tools in hand (e.g., buckets, pruners, hoses). If the roof cannot be accessed via a walk-through door, this may require installing a wide ladder or fire escape-style stairs on the inside or outside of the building.
- If there is a concern of getting too close to the roof's edge while doing maintenance, install a railing around the edge for safety. Alternatively, for sloped roofs, workers may need to use harnesses during maintenance activities.

Helpful Skills:

- Use of motorized landscaping equipment
- Chainsaw skills
- Use of grading equipment for larger jobs
- *Note*: OSHA safety requirements and certifications may apply to green roof maintenance.

Equipment Typically Used to Regain Proper Access:

- Mower, trimmer
- For very overgrown areas, chainsaw and/or bush hog
- For areas that need to be regraded, excavator, skid steer, or other grading equipment

Problem #2: Flow is obstructed in or out of the practice

General Approach for All Practices:

- Flow can bypass an SMP when there is too much sediment/debris buildup near the inlets or due to grading changes in the drainage area (e.g., repaving of parking lot). If the cause of blockage or bypass is not obvious, inspect the practice during rainfall to watch the flow paths. (See **Section 4.6 – Improper Flow Pathways** for additional guidance.)
- Obstruction of overflow or emergency spillway structures is most often due to buildup of debris, such as trees, sticks, trash. It is *very* important to keep these structures clear of such blockages in order to avoid flooding or a dam breech (**avoid conditions caused by beaver activity - top photo**).
- Where debris cannot easily be cleared by hand, special equipment and skills may be needed. An obstructed riser structure in a wet pond may need to be accessed by boat **(bottom photo)**. In cases where large sticks, tree branches, trash, or other debris obstruct the overflow or spillway, they may need to be cut up by chainsaw. Large debris will usually need to be hauled away with a truck.

Helpful Skills:

- Chainsaw skills
- Muscle strength to haul large debris
- Boating capabilities

Equipment Typically Used to Clear Obstructions:

- Gloves, shovels, pruners, rakes, and other hand tools
- Waders for wetlands
- Chainsaw for large sticks and branches
- Cable puller (come-along) to remove large branches that cannot be pulled out by hand
- Boat and personal floatation device for riser structures in wet ponds
- Truck to haul away debris

4.4. Erosion

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Sheetflow/Disconnection, Swales, Bioretention, and Ponds/Wetlands

Problem: Erosion on practice surface, inlets, and/or outlets

General Approach for All Practices:

- See **Section 4.10 – Embankment and Overflow Condition** for how to repair erosion on side-slope embankments.
- Rill and gully erosion occurs when runoff flow is concentrated. Deep rills and gully erosion on the practice surface **(top photo)** will require the surface to be regraded to make uniform again. Use the lightest equipment possible in order to minimize soil compaction during excavation.
- After excavation, reseed/plant the area with ground cover that is appropriate for the moisture conditions of the practice. Amend or enhance soil as needed according to a soil test; soil may need more organic material to support plants.
- To prevent further erosion on the surface of the practice, ensure that flow from the inlets can spread out adequately and has enhanced energy dissipation features. This may require installing or enhancing a stone apron outlet protection that flares out and down to the level of the practice to slow and spread out the flow. Other options include check dams, energy dissipation devices, or an armored low-flow channel. A stilling basin **(bottom photo)** can also dissipate flow as it comes out of an inlet or outlet pipe. Apply similar treatments to any outlets that are experiencing erosion.
- Any sloped soils that are disturbed during excavation will likely need erosion-control matting to hold it in place while vegetation becomes established.

Helpful Skills:

- Landscaping/Gardening
- Consult with Cooperative Extension Office or independent laboratory for soil testing
- Skills with excavation equipment
- Knowledge of sediment and erosion control practices and resources appropriate for the area

Equipment Typically Used for Fixing Erosion:

- Rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other “gardening” equipment
- Light excavation or grading equipment for larger jobs
- Equipment to deliver, unload, and move stone and other materials around
- Plants and/or seed mix, plus a way to move and store plant stock without damaging it or drying in out

4.5. Departure from Design Dimensions

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Swales, Bioretention, Ponds/Wetlands, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters

Problem: Practice dimensions have been altered

General Approach for All Practices:

- Once constructed, the dimensions of an SMP may become altered from the original design for a variety of reasons. These reasons can include:
- The SMP was not constructed to the proper dimensions at initial installation.
- Sediment accumulation in the SMP reduces the intended storage volume of the practice **(top photo).**
- Redevelopment or regrading of the site encroaches into the footprint of the SMP.
- Dumping of leaves, trash, or other debris into the SMP reduces the intended storage volume of the practice.
- If it appears that the dimensions of an SMP have been altered, proceed as follows:
- Consult the original design or as-built plans and sizing computations for the SMP to identify the intended dimensions and storage volume of the practice. Measure the length, width, and depth of the practice to estimate the current storage volume. Calculate the difference in volume to determine whether it is significant enough to warrant restoring the practice to its original dimensions. If the loss in volume is greater than about 10%, this likely warrants action.
- If the SMP's original storage volume cannot practically be restored because of current site conditions, an additional SMP may need to be built elsewhere on the site in order to regain adequate storage and treatment volume for the site.
- For problems of dumping by individuals on or near the site, install "No Dumping" or similar signage to inform people that this is not an appropriate place to dispose of debris. Any debris that has already been dumped should be removed from the practice either by hand or with equipment.

Helpful Skills:

- Basic surveying
- Understanding stormwater design plans and sizing computations
- Stormwater management design
- Skills with excavation equipment and erosion and sediment control

Equipment Typically Used to Investigate and Fix Dimensions:

- Simple level or survey equipment, tape measure, and other tools to measure SMP dimensions
- Light excavation or grading equipment for larger jobs
- Rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other "gardening" equipment for small jobs
- Soil stabilization materials

4.6. Improper Flow Paths

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Rainwater Harvesting, Sheetflow/Disconnection, Swales, Bioretention, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters

Problem #1: Flow intended to go into a practice is diverted by debris or grit buildup or capacity issues at inlets

Bioretention, Swales, Infiltration, Sand/Organic Filters:

- Grit, sediment, leaves, and other debris builds up at curb inlets or other inlets, sometimes to the point where flow is diverted completely around the practice (photos above). This is a common issue for practices that rely on curb cuts or other small inlet structures to get water into the practice for treatment. A minor amount of debris may be OK and not affect the ability of water to enter the practice. However, be aware of conditions where flow *that is supposed to be treated* is diverted to a downgradient storm drain or other structures in such a way that the stormwater treatment is entirely or partially bypassed.

- In many cases, correcting the problem may simply involve removing or unclogging the inlet.
- However, this problem can be chronic if the inlet design is susceptible to clogging. This can occur if the slope from the inlet into the practice is flat and/or there are controllable sources of sediment and debris in the drainage area.
- For chronic problems, consider redesigning inlets to be more clog proof. One solution is to build in a 2 to 3-inch drop from the curb inlet onto a gravel or stone diaphragm along the edge of the practice (see example in photo are right).
- Inlets that are undersized for the flow coming to them should be enlarged and armored with an appropriate erosion-resistant lining.

Rainwater Harvesting:

- Water intended to be collected in rainwater harvesting systems is sometimes not delivered to the tank or cistern if the system of gutters, downspouts, pipes, etc. is not sized properly or if the first-flush diverter or vortex filter is not functioning correctly and diverting too much water away from the tank.
- As with inlets, this may simply be a matter of routine cleaning of gutters, downspouts, vortex filters, etc.
- It may also be a design or capacity issue, in which case, installing larger gutters or a more robust piping system may be in order.

Source: Rainwater Management Solutions 1

Example of enhancing the gutter and piping system leading to a rainwater harvesting system

Helpful Skills:

- Basic surveying
- Typical landscaping skills using materials such as soil, rock/stone, edging material, mulch, etc.
- Light construction of gutters, downspouts, piping
- Some knowledge of first-flush diverter and vortex filter products

Problem #2: Flow is not uniformly accessing the entire treatment area

Bioretention, Swales, Infiltration, Disconnection and Sheetflow, Sand/Organic Filters:

Improper flow path issues in this category include:

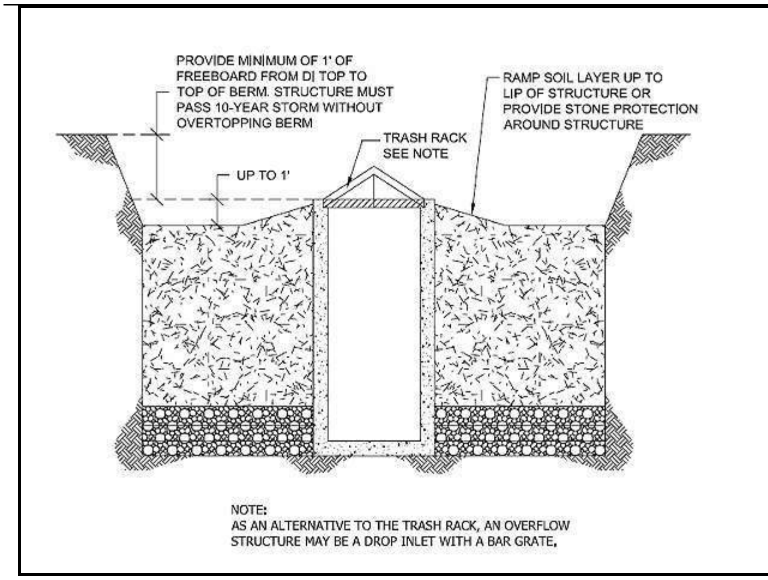
- Water forming channels or rills through the treatment bed of bioretention, swales, infiltration, or surface sand filters, and thus not spreading out across the treatment area surface
- Water ponding only at one end of the treatment area because the surface is not level
- Water piping through weak spots to an outlet or underdrain, such as where soil media meets a concrete structure
- See Section 4.4, Erosion for issues of channeling or erosion on the treatment surface.
- For uneven treatment area and preferential ponding, assess the severity of the problem. Compare the relative elevations of the "high" part of the treatment area (the area where water does NOT seem to pond) and any overflow structure or weir where high water flows will leave the practice. If there is still some freeboard (such that the overflow structure is higher than ALL of the treatment bed surface), then there will still be some ponding for larger rainfall events. Try some minor raking or moving soil media and mulch around to even out the filter bed.
- However, the problem is more serious if parts of the treatment area are higher than the overflow structure. These areas will never be valuable for treatment purposes. The treatment area is supposed to fill up like a bathtub, so some regrading is needed to level out the treatment area.
- If water is piping or shortcircuiting through the soil or sand media, forming sinkholes or otherwise bypassing the intended treatment mechanism, it will be necessary to repair these spots. Around concrete or metal overflow structures, use soil material right around the structure that can be compacted (bioretention soil media tends to be light, sandy, and fluffy and won't compact very well). Another option is to "ramp up" the soil layer to the lip of the structure so that there won't be a hydraulic jump at this potentially weak point. See the figure below.

These three issues are illustrated below:

Water from the inlet at top of photo is channeling through the bioretention area.

Water is preferentially ponding only at one end of the bioretention because the surface is not flat.

Water is "piping" down to the underdrain at the weak spot where the soil media meets the concrete overflow structure.



Ramp up soil layer to the lip of the structure to address this being a weak interface where water can work down and create bypassing. (Source: Virginia 2013 Stormwater BMP Specifications, Specification #9, Bioretention, Figure 9.13.)

Impervious Disconnection:

The most likely flow path issues with Impervious Disconnection are: (1) owners intentionally diverting downspouts away from pervious area and onto impervious area **(left photo below),** and (2) slight grading issues diverting the water away from the intended pervious receiving area **(right photo below).**

Both issues are fairly straightforward to address but involve communicating and working with property owners to explain the purpose of disconnection and how to properly maintain it. The second issue may involve some minor regrading or building low-profile berms to get water to flow to the intended disconnection area.

Helpful Skills:

- Rudimentary surveying
- Typical landscaping skills—using materials such as soil, rock/stone, edging material, mulch, etc.

Equipment Typically Used for Inspecting and Fixing Flow Paths

- Site levels or total station to get relative elevations among different parts of treatment area, inlets, overflow structures, etc.
- Small, simple tools—flat shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes, other common landscape/gardening tools
- Large, more complicated equipment—small excavators to move material around or do regrading. Always work from the side of the practice and NOT within the practice itself.

4.7. Sediment Buildup

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Swales, Bioretention, Permeable Pavement, Ponds/Wetlands, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters

Problem: Sediment accumulation more than 2-inches thick covering 25% or more of the practice surface area

Bioretention, Swales:

- Determine the source(s) of sediment. The most likely sources are: (1) premature installation of the practice during the construction process and discharge of construction site sediment loads; (2) erosion in the contributing drainage area *after* construction is complete; and (3) erosion along the practice side slope or within the practice itself. If it is an ongoing source, it must be abated (see **Sections 4.2, Contributing Drainage Area, and 4.4, Erosion).**
- Use a soil auger to auger holes in various places across the Bioretention or Swale surface area, especially in areas where sediment is accumulating. Determine how deep the sediment is penetrating into the soil media layer. Usually, it will be the top 2 to 3 inches that are most affected. Note that for swales *without* an engineered soil media, the sediment layer will likely be confined to the surface.
- Remove the "fouled" soil media to the affected depth (using flat shovels or small excavators and working from the side) and replace with clean material from an approved vendor (bioretention soil media or equivalent). If no vendors are available in your area, use the soil media specifications from the **Design Manual** to replicate the right mix of sand, topsoil, and composted organic material.
- Check to ensure that the practice is filtering at the proper rate after the next several storm events.

Infiltration:

- For infiltration practices excavated to a suitable infiltrating soil layer (e.g., not stone reservoir layer), use the same procedures as for Bioretention/Swales above.
- For infiltration trenches and basins that have a stone reservoir layer, use similar procedures, but use a shovel to dig into the stone layer to ascertain how deep the sediment incursion is into the stone. Remove down to this layer and replace with clean material.
- If the infiltration practice is clogged, see **Section 4.8: Clogging.**
- As with Bioretention, check for controllable sources of sediment in the Drainage Area (**Section 4.2**).

Permeable Pavement:

- NOTE: Routine sweeping with a regenerative air vacuum (maximum power 2,500 rpm) is important to avoid more costly repairs that result from deferred maintenance. It is best to sweep the pavement surface in the early spring after winter sanding/salting materials or snow piles have led to sediment or winter slag accumulation. Also, if the area is surrounded by tree canopy, fall cleanup is essential, as vegetative debris tends to get pulverized by vehicle traffic and ground into the pavement surface.
- Observe the pavement surface during a storm event to see whether the sediment is clogging the pavement (i.e., standing water on the surface after the storm stops). If so, see **Section 4.8: Clogging.**
- Remove several of the paver blocks in different parts of the structure to ascertain how deep the sediment is penetrating into the bedding and reservoir layers. Most of the time, sediment incursion will be limited to the top 1 or 2 inches of the pavement bedding layer (for permeable interlocking concrete pavers and concrete grid pavers).
- Based on the above observations, it may be worthwhile to quantify the infiltration rate using ASTM C-1701/1701M. This is most useful in conducting the test in the *same place within the pavement surface through the course of several years* to document reduction in infiltration rates. Repair or restorative sweeping is warranted when infiltration rates drop below around 10 inches per hour. NOTE: As stated above, this can likely be avoided if routine annual sweeping is conducted.
- If sediment covers more than 25% of the surface, is deeper than 2 inches, or vegetation is starting to grow where sediment has accumulated, consult a street-sweeping vendor about *restorative* sweeping. In this case, it will be necessary to use a higher RPM sweeper or vacuum sweeper to suck out more of the bedding pea gravel that has been fouled, then replace with clean material.

Infiltration test using ASTM C-1701

Pulling grass and weeds from the joints can damage parking surface if roots are firmly established in the bedding layer.

- Vegetation growing in the pavement joints should be removed either manually or with a water-safe herbicide (e.g., glysophate without surfactants). It is important to not let weeds proliferate in the pavement surface because pulling them out by the roots may damage the pavement structure.
- Check the pavement surface after a storm event to ensure that it is draining properly.

The North Carolina State University (NCSU) Stormwater Engineering Group has an informative Urban Waterways publication, *Maintaining Permeable Pavements (2011):* **http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/stormwater/pubs.htm**

Routine, air-vacuum sweeping in the early spring and fall is the best approach for permeable pavement maintenance (Photo source: Toronto and Region Conservation)

Ponds and Wetlands:

- Sedimentation is an inevitable process in ponds and wetlands. NOTE that upstream erosion, especially along stream channels or ditches leading to the practice will accelerate the sedimentation process and lead to more frequent and costly sediment removal operations. Whenever possible, it is important to mitigate any upstream erosion issues.
- Forebays and/or pre-treatment areas should be cleaned out when they reach 50% of their design capacity, which may correspond to once every five to seven years. Once cleanout is complete, it will be worthwhile to install a graduated rod into the forebay with a clear marking of future sediment clean-out levels.
- The main body of a pond or wetland may need to be dredged on an infrequent basis or when sediment has replaced 50% of the design capacity. There are many dredging methods available. Excavators with long arms can handle most small or moderate-sized ponds. Other methods may be necessary for larger facilities. Dredging can be a complicated operation involving dewatering, storage of wet sediment, and possibly hauling to on-site or off-site disposal or reuse areas. Consult a qualified contractor to explore available methods and costs for the particular application. Once again, installation of a graduated rod can help mark future clean-out levels.

Sand/Organic Filters:

- See the section above on Bioretention/Swales as some of the procedures will be similar, especially for above-ground filters. It is important to determine whether the drainage area is generating a controllable source of sediment that can be abated.
- Underground trench or vault filters will require routine maintenance to: (1) remove accumulated sediment, trash, and floatables from the sedimentation chamber, usually with a vac truck; and (2) remove sediment, grit, and sludge from the top layer of the filter media and replace with clean material. NOTE: Depending on the configuration of the underground filter, confined-space procedures may apply. For a normally operating practice, these maintenance tasks should be conducted every two to three years. If the filter is treating a stormwater hotspot or a particularly dirty drainage area (e.g., vehicle maintenance, washing, repair), the frequency may increase to annually or more often, as dictated by Level 2 inspections. Also, in these cases, it may be warranted to test the material to ensure proper disposal.
- Some proprietary filters require replacement of special cartridges or filter material. Consult the vendor or manufacturer for special maintenance procedures.

Routine cleaning of a perimeter or "Delaware" sand filter. This can be done from the surface, but deeper, vault-type filters will require confined-space entry procedures.

Helpful Skills:

- Most common contracting skills
- Excavation, dewatering, and sediment disposal in some cases
- Knowledge of maintenance equipment, such as vac trucks, street sweepers, etc.
- Knowledge of preferred conditions for bioretention soil media
- Soil testing in some cases where sediment is being removed from stormwater hotspots

Equipment Typically Used for Sediment Removal Activities:

- Small, simple tools—flat shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes, other common tools
- Larger jobs—small or large excavators, loaders, dewatering equipment (pumps, dirt bags, etc.), trucks to haul material to on-site or off-site disposal or reuse areas, erosion and sediment-control supplies.

4.8. Clogging

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Bioretention, Permeable Pavement, Infiltration, and Sand/Organic Filters

Problem: Filter media clogged; water standing on practice surface for 48 to 72 hours or longer after a storm

Bioretention:

Standing water on the bioretention surface 48 to 72 hours after a storm event is a sure indication of clogging (top photo). Clogging of bioretention practices can be tricky to diagnose as there are several probable causes:

a. Clogged underdrain
b. Filter fabric between soil media and underdrain stone
c. Too much sediment/grit washing in from drainage area
d. Too much ponding depth
e. Improper soil media

The following procedure can be used to work through diagnosing the most common causes, beginning with the simplest and easiest to fix and progressing through more complex remedies:

1. Look for a thin, crusty layer of sediment that covers some or all of the soil media. It is often grayish in color. This thin layer can sometimes be enough to cause slow drainage. Scrape this crust off and ascertain sources of sediment in the drainage area (see Section 4.2, Contributing Drainage Area). Often, this problem can be caused by the bioretention soil media being installed too early in the construction process, but other chronic sediment sources should also be checked.
2. Open the underdrain cleanout and pour water in to verify that the underdrains are functioning and not clogged or otherwise in need of repair. The purpose of this check is to see whether there is standing water all the way down through the soil. If there is standing water on the surface, *but not in the underdrain*, then there is clogging somewhere in the soil layer. If the underdrain and cleanout have standing water and there is not water coming out the other end (outlet) of the underdrain pipe, then the underdrain is clogged and will need to be rooted out.
3. Use a soil auger to auger several holes down through the soil media to the underdrain layer (if present) or underlying soil. Check to see whether there is a layer of filter fabric at the bottom of the soil layer. The auger will pierce through any filter fabric that is present, and pieces of fabric in the auger bucket should be removed. Notice if the fabric is “blinded” or clogged with sediment. This is a common issue with older bioretention practices. If the practice has a clogged the filter fabric layer, go to step #6, install wick drain.

Filter fabric, where present, is a likely source of clogging.

4. While checking for filter fabric in auger holes, also note whether there is a layer of saturated soil media or bad soil media (e.g., too much clay content) that may be on top of a good media layer. This will be fairly obvious as the top 3 or 4 inches will be mucky and saturated, with dry and sandy media below. If this is the case, it will be necessary to remove the bad material and replace with good, clean bioretention soil media in accordance with the design specifications. Till or incorporate the good material into the underlying existing soil media to establish a good contact.

5. If the entire profile of soil media is bad, has too much clay content, or does not appear to meet the specifications for soil media, it will be worthwhile to test the soil and compare against the recommended specifications (e.g., clay content, particle sizes, etc.). If the soil does NOT meet specifications, see steps #6 and #9 below.
6. If the problem appears to be filter fabric or bad soil media (steps #3 or #5 above), there is a critical decision to be made. It is an expensive proposition to dig up the entire facility to either remove the filter fabric or replace the entire soil layer. If the clogging problem is not severe in nature, an intermediate (and much cheaper) option may be to install wick drains. Using a 6-inch auger bucket, auger numerous vertical holes around the practice surface area, making sure to auger all the way down to the underdrain stone or underlying soil (if there is no underdrain). Hammer 6-inch perforated PVC or other type of pipe into these holes. Perforations should be about 3/8-inch diameter. Fill the pipes with clean underdrain gravel (#57 stone) mixed in with coarse construction sand. These drains will serve to wick fines from the surrounding soil media and will provide alternative drainage. Check after the next several storm events to see whether the wick drains improve drainage.

Adding sand to a wick drain. The vertical perforated PVC pipe has already been placed in the auger hole.

7. Sometimes the cause of saturated soil media is springs or some type of baseflow coming into the practice. This is a more difficult problem as bioretention is not supposed to receive this type of constant flow. It will be necessary to identify and reroute springs or baseflow or perhaps replace the bioretention with a different type of practice.
8. Another possible source of poor drainage or clogging is that there can be too much water on top of the soil media when the bioretention fills up. Most specifications call for a maximum ponding depth of 12 inches, but sometimes the ponding depth can be 18 or even 24 inches. While this increases the amount of head pushing water down through the soil media, it can also lead to compaction or too much sediment building up. If the bioretention has a ponding depth greater than 12 inches, consider configuring the outlet or large storm overflow to reduce the ponding depth to 12 inches or less. Check with the local stormwater authority to ensure that doing this will not compromise the required treatment volume of the practice.
9. If clogging is too severe to be fixed with wick drains or other remedies listed above, it may be necessary to rebuild the bioretention by digging up the existing soil, taking out any filter fabric that is between the soil media and underdrain stone, and rebuilding and replanting according to the design specifications.
10. Whatever the chosen remedy, check to ensure that the practice is filtering at the proper rate after the next several storm events.

The Chesapeake Stormwater Network (CSN) has produced an excellent reference guide for inspecting and diagnosing Bioretention issues, *Technical Bulletin #10, Bioretention Illustrated.* This tool can be used as an additional reference and can be downloaded using this link: http://chesapeakestormwater.net/category/publications/

Infiltration:

- Clogging of infiltration practices can be simple to resolve or fatal:
- On the *simple* side, clogging (or poor drainage) may arise from sediment, vegetative debris, parking lot grit, or other debris clogging the top few inches of soil or stone.
- With luck, the practice will have an observation well (vertical perforated PVC pipe with cap that extends through the stone reservoir in an infiltration trench or basin). Check the observation well three days after a storm event of ½-inch or more. If water is standing in the observation well to the surface, then the whole profile may be clogged (see below under *fatal*). If the observation well has only a few inches or no water and there is still water standing on the surface, then surface clogging is a likely culprit.
- For infiltration practices in soil (no stone reservoir), auger several holes around the infiltration surface area. If saturated soil seems to be on top of good, clean, dry soil, then surface clogging seems likely.
- For infiltration trenches and basins with a gravel reservoir, dig several holes around the surface to determine, again, whether there seems to be a layer of gravel clogged with sediment, leaves, vegetative debris, parking lot grit, etc. If possible, dig down to where the gravel meets the underlying soil to see whether a layer of filter fabric is present (which may be common with older practices). If this is the case, blinding of the filter fabric may be a cause of the clogging.
- For surface clogging, remove the affected material down to the level where the soil or gravel seems clean, and replace with clean material. If filter fabric seems to be a problem, it will be necessary to dig up the gravel, remove the filter fabric, and rebuild the reservoir layer in accordance with the current design specifications. In either case, check after a storm event to ensure that this has resolved the issue.
- On the *fatal* side, the underlying soil may not be suitable for infiltration, either due to soil characteristics, compaction during construction, or other causes. Check the original design package to see whether any soil testing was done at the time. It may be worthwhile to auger down to the infiltration interface layer (e.g., where stone reservoir meets the underlying soil and then another several inches below this interface), and take several soil samples for lab analysis to compare to current soil specifications (see information below about infiltration soil analysis).

- It may be that a geotechnical analysis would reveal that there is a good infiltration soil layer, but it is lower than the existing interface. This would still require a complete rebuild and excavation down to the suitable soil layer. Restoring porosity at the designed elevation would require replacing soil above this suitable layer and avoiding compaction.
- Another option would be to convert the practice to a bioretention with an underdrain. Check with the local stormwater authority to see whether this would require any site plan or stormwater plan amendments or other permits.
- Many updated state stormwater manuals and specifications include protocols for infiltration soil testing and analysis that reference various ASTM standards. For example, see: *Virginia 2013 BMP Standards & Specifications, Specification #8: Infiltration, Appendix 8-A, Infiltration and Soil Testing* at: **http://www.deq.virginia.gov/fileshare/wps/2013_DRAFT_BMP_Specs/**

Permeable Pavement:

- AS NOTED IN SECTION 4.7 – SEDIMENT BUILDUP, routine sweeping with a regenerative air vacuum (maximum power 2,500 rpm) is important to avoid more costly repairs that result from deferred maintenance. Preventative maintenance is the best and most cost-effective way to prevent clogging in the first place.
- If there is standing water on the pavement surface 48 to 72 hours after a storm event of ½-inch or more, then the pavement surface is clogged.
- Check the design plan or as-built plan to see whether the permeable pavement design includes an underdrain. There may also be underdrain cleanouts at the edge of the permeable pavement.
- If there IS an underdrain, the first thing to check is whether the underdrain is clogged, crushed, etc. Check to see whether there is standing water in the underdrain cleanout 48 to 72 hours after a storm event. If the underdrain is dry, pour water into the underdrain with a hose and see whether it comes out the other end. If the underdrain is clogged, snake it out, as this is the first and easiest thing to try.
- If the underdrain is working, then clogging may be due to: (1) clogged surface or bedding layer; or (2) underlying soil is not suitable for infiltration for designs with no underdrain. First, refer to the guidance in Section 4.7 – Sediment Buildup, and then proceed as follows:
- IF THERE IS NO UNDERDRAIN AND THE DESIGN IS BASED ON SOIL INFILTRATION UNDER THE PAVEMENT, it will be worthwhile to check the soil because unclogging the surface layer will likely not fix the problem. Check the original design package for any soil infiltration testing. It is likely worthwhile to remove the entire pavement section in several places down to the soil layer and to do a geotechnical investigation of the soil profile. See: ASTM C-1701/1701M and/or *Virginia 2013 BMP Standards & Specifications, Specification #8: Infiltration, Appendix 8-A, Infiltration and Soil Testing* for examples of soil infiltration protocols (URL above).
- If the soil is not suitable for an infiltration design, it will probably be necessary to rebuild the pavement using an underdrain design or possibly adding subsurface drainage along the perimeter of the parking area.
- IF THERE IS AN UNDERDRAIN OR THE SOIL IS SUITABLE FOR INFILTRATION, the best approach to try to unclog the pavement is restorative sweeping with a vacuum sweeper. Regenerative air sweepers may not have enough suction to relieve the clogging.
- If vacuum sweeping is not successful, it may be necessary to rebuild any layers fouled with sediment and fines. It is likely that this will be confined to the bedding layer and gravel used in the paver stone joints, but some clogging can possibly move down into the underlying stone reservoir layer.
- The North Carolina State University (NCSU) Stormwater Engineering Group has an informative Urban Waterways publication, *Maintaining Permeable Pavements (2011):* **http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/stormwater/pubs.htm**

Water standing on the parking surface 48 to 72 hours after a storm is an indication of clogging. Snow piles at the edge of the photo point to possible clogging from winter sanding or plowing.

Sand/Organic Filters:

Standing water on the parking lot is evidence that this perimeter sand filter (under the sidewalk) is clogged.

- See the section above on Bioretention/Swales as some of the procedures will be similar, especially for above-ground filters.
- Also see Section 4.7 – Sediment Buildup for guidance on routine maintenance of the sedimentation and filter chambers.
- As with Bioretention, there can be various causes for clogged filters:
- Filter fabric layer under the filter media that has blinded or clogged
- Clogging of the surface of the filter layer or filter cartridges
- Bad filter media (e.g., sand or organic media)
- "Plumbing" issues with configuration of overflow and underdrain pipes
- Fortunately, filters are usually confined within concrete vaults or manholes, so diagnosing and rectifying clogging problems should be more straightforward. Check the original design or as-built plans. Some of the following guidance may also be helpful:
- For proprietary cartridge or special filter media structures, consult the vendor or manufacturer for recommended solutions.
- See Section 4.7 for guidance on removing the top layer of filter media and replacing with clean material, as well as vacuuming out any sedimentation chambers.
- If it is suspected that overflow or outlet pipes are not configured correctly, check against the design plans and also standard drawings from the manufacturer.
- Chronic clogging problems are likely due to excessively dirty drainage areas, including uncontrolled sources of sediment, oil and grease washoff, vegetative debris from surrounding trees or shrubs, or other sources. It will be important to check and resolve any controllable sources of clogging in the drainage area (see **Section 4.2 – Contributing Drainage Area**).

Helpful Skills:

- Soil infiltration analysis techniques as per ASTM and/or current BMP design specifications
- Excavation, dewatering, and sediment disposal in some cases
- Knowledge of maintenance equipment, such as vac trucks, street sweepers, etc.
- Knowledge of preferred conditions for bioretention, sand/organic filter media, or standard permeable pavement types and bedding layers
- General practice of trying easier or less expensive strategies before jumping right to wholesale reconstruction of a practice

Equipment Typically Used for Unclogging Activities:

- Soil infiltration testing or geotechnical equipment
- Small or large excavators, loaders, dewatering equipment (pumps, dirt bags, etc.), trucks to haul material to on-site or off-site disposal or reuse areas, erosion and sediment control supplies
- Pavement demolition and repair equipment
- Mulch, plants, filter media, and other materials needed to rebuild practices

4.9. Vegetation

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Swales, Tree Planting, Bioretention, Green Roofs, and Ponds/Wetlands

Problem #1: Not enough vegetation; vegetation *is unhealthy*

Bioretention, Swales, Tree Planting:

- Test soil/media to ensure proper conditions exist for plant survival.
- Check water drawdown after a storm to make sure that wet/saturated conditions are not the cause of plant failure. If this IS an issue, see **Section 4.8 – Clogging.**
- Amend or enhance soil as needed; soil may need more organic material to support plants, but do NOT use uncomposted organic material or animal waste, as it will likely export undesirable nutrients to the stormwater system.
- If plants have continued to die, consider a different species or entire planting palette or revised planting plan **(photo to right shows the need for a whole new planting plan)**. Also consider using an appropriate bioretention or swale native seed mix to supplement use of plugs or other nursery stock.
- Consult a horticulturalist or plant nursery if there is evidence of disease or pests.
- Replant and add mulch or ground cover as needed.

Ponds and Wetlands:

- See **Section 4.13 – Pool Quality** for general guidance on pond and wetland vegetation maintenance, as well as the following.
- For emergent vegetation, determine whether water depths are too deep or shallow for survival (i.e., depths are different from design depths, or original design included improper vegetation).
- If a small amount of supplemental vegetation is needed, plant wetland plugs per nursery guidance.
- For large-scale plantings, drain the permanent pool and plant during the early spring.

Green Roof:

- Consult with a green roof plant vendor about possible causes of plant failure. Lack of watering during initial establishment could be the main culprit.
- Work with a qualified vendor to develop and install a new planting plan.
- Speak with building facilities maintenance personnel to ensure they understand need for watering and caring for new plants after they are installed.

Helpful Skills:

- Landscaping/gardening
- Consult with Cooperative Extension Office or independent laboratory for soil testing
- If original planting plan is deemed inadequate, consult a landscape architect or horticulturalist to determine whether a revised planting plan is needed.
- Knowledge of native plant and/or wetland plant nurseries in general region

Problem #2: Too much vegetation, overgrown (with invasive species), not maintained

General Approach for All Practices:

- Determine which invasive plants are present. For a list of regulated and prohibited invasive plants in New York State, see *New York State Prohibited and Regulated Plants* (NYS DEC, NYS Agriculture and Markets, 2014) at: http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/isprohibitedplants2.pdf
- Review whether the original planting plan relied on these plants; for example, some wetland plans may rely on "aggressive colonizers" such as cat tails.
- For more detailed information regarding appropriate control measures for each species, consult the Cornell Cooperative Extension Invasive Species Program at the following link: http://ccetompkins.org/environment/invasive-nuisance-species/invasive-plants. If invasives have taken over the facility, wholesale removal and replanting with desirable species may be necessary.
- If (non-invasive) plants are overgrown, (**example in photo to right**), remove, thin, or trim back excessive vegetation.
- If an entire new planting plan is deemed necessary, use SMP-Specific Guidance in the remainder of this manual, along with landscaping goals for the site location, to devise a plan that allows for adequate growth over a long period of time. A simple, clear planting design (**example in photo below**) with a long-term plan has the best chance of being maintained through time. Maintenance crews need to know which plants are part of the design versus weeds and how the practice should look from year to year.
- Develop a plan to ensure proper weeding, pruning, trimming, and replanting to maintain the plan over time.
- See **Section 4.13 – Pool Quality** for general guidance on pond and wetland vegetation maintenance, as well as the following.

Helpful Skills:

- Knowledge of exotic and invasive species is needed. Consult a local Cooperative Extension Office.
- Specific measures may include mechanical hand pulling, regrading (requires construction equipment), or herbicide/pesticide application *safe for aquatic environments*.
- Landscape architect
- Knowledge of wetland plants (for ponds/wetlands)
- Knowledge of SMP design (to understand hydrologic regime for plant selection)

Equipment Typically Used for Vegetation Maintenance Activities

- Soil auger to diagnose issues of soil drainage that may affect vegetation health
- Rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other "gardening" equipment
- Light excavation or grading equipment for larger jobs
- Equipment to deliver, unload, and move soil media, mulch, and other materials
- Plants and/or seed mix, plus a way to move and store plant stock without damaging it or drying it out
- Planting bars, soil drills, etc.
- For planting in standing water (e.g., ponds, wetlands), pumps or pump-around systems and dirt bags or other ways to temporarily dewater planting area

4.10. Embankment and Overflow Condition

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Swales, Bioretention, and especially Ponds/Wetlands

Problem #1: Rill and channel erosion and bare dirt areas of embankments

Bioretention, Swales:

- Erosion and areas of bare dirt indicate two basic issues: 1) soils and moisture levels are not suitable for the plants or turf used; and 2) vegetation cannot take hold because of concentrated flow, physical wear, or poor soil conditions. Address these issues first with a soil/media test to ensure proper conditions exist for plant survival.
- High salt content from winter deicing of pavement is a common culprit of poor soil conditions for roadside plants. If this is the case, restore area with plant species that can tolerate salt levels, or replace edge plants with a stone diaphragm to intercept runoff from road.
- Amend or enhance soil as needed; soil may need more organic material to support dense ground cover.
- For concentrated flow and physical wear, redirect concentrated flow so that it disperses in mulched and vegetated areas. Stake in mulch and replant with vigorous plants recommended through the soils test.
- If plants have continued to die, consider a different species or entire planting palette or a revised planting plan (see **Section 4.9 – Vegetation and photo to right)**. Also consider using an appropriate bioretention or swale native seed mix to supplement use of plugs or other nursery stock.
- Consult a horticulturalist or plant nursery if there is evidence of disease or pests.
- Replant and add mulch or ground cover as needed.

Ponds and Wetlands:

- Where erosion has deposited soil within the pond or wetland water line, remove this material and reshape the slope.
- If a small amount of supplemental vegetation is needed, plant wetland plugs per nursery guidance.
- To address rill and channel erosion, first obtain a soil sample test to get soil amendment recommendations. Undercut the eroded sections and replace with clean amended soil, based on the soil test, and reseed as appropriate for the season.
- It may be necessary to stake in seed blankets or erosion-resistant lining (e.g., erosion-control matting or even rock in extreme situations) to stabilize eroded areas. Again, choose seed types appropriate for the season.
- Based on soil test guidance, reseed bare areas to prevent further erosion.
- For persistent problems, reroute the flow to more stable receiving areas using berms, diversions, etc.

Helpful Skills:

- Landscaping/gardening
- Consult with Cooperative Extension Office or independent laboratory for soil testing.
- If original planting plan is deemed inadequate, consult a landscape architect or horticulturalist to determine whether a revised planting plan is needed.
- Knowledge of sediment and erosion control practices and resources appropriate for the area

Problem #2: Settlement, loss of armoring material, erosion of emergency overflow

General Approach for All Practices:

- Settlement, loss of armoring material, erosion and accumulated debris can affect the dimension, water velocity or capacity of the emergency overflow such that embankment failure could occur in flood events (**photos below**).
- Inspect for exposure of soil or geotextile base material in the overflow and rearmor areas of exposure.
- In cases of settlement, a qualified engineer should be sought to assess its capacity and impact on pond capacity.
- Erosion of spillways should be repaired and revegetated as described for embankments.

Helpful Skills:

- Knowledge of sediment and erosion control practices for the area
- Completion of self-guided training on dam safety through Association of State Dam Safety Officials: http://www.damsafety.org

Problem #3: Impounding structure (embankment or dam) integrity issues due to tunneling or digging animals, woody vegetation or seepage

Ponds/Wetlands:

- Impounding structure stability is a serious concern, especially where trees have become established on the slopes, or there's evidence of animal burrows or seepage.
- The best approach for trees on the crest, slopes, and adjacent to an impounding structure or embankment is to cut them down before they reach significant size. If large trees have been cut down but their root systems not removed, carefully monitor the area around the remaining stumps for signs of seepage.
- Exercise judgement for trees on the surrounding side slopes that are NOT impounding structures (not designed to hold back water in the pool). Sometimes a forested edge can enhance the appeal of a pond, but access for maintenance must also be available, and some trees can drop debris into ponds, leading to quality issues.
- Animal burrows can be dangerous to the structural integrity of the embankment because they weaken it and can create pathways for seepage. Professional exterminators may be needed to trap and remove animal pests.
- Seepage as water flow or boiling sand on the lower portion of the exterior slope or toe area of an impounding structure should be brought to the attention of a qualified engineer.
- Leakage around conveyance structures such as barrel pipes or spillways should be monitored for increase since the last inspection. A qualified engineer is needed to resolve issues of piping or seepage along the barrel pipe through a dam.
- Turbidity or cloudiness in seepage should also be brought to the attention of a qualified engineer.

Helpful Skills:

- Completion of self-guided training on dam safety through the Association of State Dam Safety Officials: http://www.damsafety.org

Equipment Typically Used for Embankment and Overflow Maintenance Activities

- Excavation or grading equipment for larger jobs
- Equipment to deliver, unload, and move soil media, mulch, and other materials
- Plants and/or seed mix, seed blanket and erosion control materials
- Rod and level for settlement measurements
- Clear glass bottle for seepage visual test

4.11. Structural Damage

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Any Practice

Problem: Structural damage to pipes, headwalls, standpipes, inlet/outlet structures, grates, curbs, and other structural components

- Structural components are necessary for water to flow into and out of stormwater practices as intended. This is a broad category that involves components composed of concrete, metal, plastic, and other materials. Some common examples include:
- Deteriorated or broken curbs that allow water to bypass a practice
- Slumping or sinkholes where soil meets a concrete drop inlet or outlet structure
- Broken or collapsed inlets
- Connections in an inlet or manhole structure that are not parged and are leaky
- Collapsed or crushed pipes (especially corrugated metal)
- Missing or broken steps or other safety features in a manhole or riser structure
- Root penetration and clogging of underdrain or other pipes
- Broken check dams
- There are too many particular instances to mention here, but the general idea is to inspect and repair any structural components that are affecting the performance of a practice or leading to a potential health or safety issue.

Helpful Skills:

- General contracting skills—concrete work, metal, proper joint sealing
- Routing out clogged pipes
- Perhaps CCTV experience to look for broken or clogged pipes

Equipment Typically Used for Fixing Erosion:

- General contracting
- CCTV

4.12. Pool Stability

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Ponds/Wetlands

Problem: Flooded or dry pond – outlet issues

General Approach for Ponds and Wetlands:

- Note high-water marks on structures or pond banks and compare with outlet structure weir.
- If the outlet weir is submerged, investigate downstream for plugs such as beaver dams, woody debris or sediment bars. Refer to **Section 4.3 – Physical Obstructions** for removal of obstructions.
- If the pond is retaining more water than it is supposed to and there is no flow from the outlet with no visible blockages in the outlet pipe, look for obstructions above the weir or outlet pipe. Woody debris, vegetation and silt can plug outfall weirs or blind rock outfall protection. Removal of such blockages tends to be a hand exercise. A jet/vacuum truck or other heavy equipment may be needed to clear excessive or precarious blockages (**photo on right**).
- If the pond is too low and not holding water in the designated pool, the outlet structure should be closely inspected to see whether it has settled from the original construction or there is leakage through joints or cracks. Finding no deficiencies with the structure, investigate the pond embankment as described in **Section 4.10** for evidence of seepage.
- If there is no evidence of seepage and the outlet structure has no apparent structural defects, an engineer should be consulted to review the pond design and determine the proper outlet elevation.

Helpful Skills:

- The ability to navigate uneven surfaces, to follow ditch banks and to sight drainage obstructions is implicit with this task.
- Ability to use a level to sight adequate elevation fall is helpful.

Equipment Typically Used for Pool Stability Evaluations

- Bright flashlight for pipe inspection
- Manhole hook for manhole cover access
- Brush hook to clear debris and walking surfaces
- Rod and level to check elevation differentials

4.13. Pool Quality

Issue Applies Most Commonly To: Ponds/Wetlands

Problem #1: Littoral shelves and pond edge: not enough vegetation; vegetation *is unhealthy;* invasive plants have taken over

Ponds and Wetlands:

- If there is not enough vegetation or no vegetation, determine whether maintenance practices have killed the plants. If so, work with the owner to educate those responsible for pond maintenance on correct methods. Consult plans for original planting and replant.
- For emergent vegetation, determine whether water depths are too deep or shallow for survival (i.e., depths are different from design depths, or original design included improper vegetation).
- If a small amount of supplemental vegetation is needed, plant wetland plugs per nursery guidance.
- For large-scale plantings, drain the permanent pool and plant during the early spring.
- If ponds are overgrown so that less than 25% of the surface area is visible, the pond water level should be lowered to enable selective plant removal.
- Invasive plants, such as phragmites or common reed, should be removed with their roots. Be sure to restore areas that have been disturbed with replacement vegetation because root removal exposes soil to erosion.
- Native plants selected based on environmental conditions have the greatest chance for survival.
- Consult a horticulturalist or plant nursery if there is evidence of disease or pests.

Helpful Skills:

- Landscaping/gardening
- If original planting plan is deemed inadequate, consult a landscape architect or horticulturalist to determine whether a revised planting plan is needed.
- Knowledge of native plants and/or wetland plant nurseries in general region
- Familiarity with New York invasive terrestrial and wetland plants and their control: http://nyis.info/

Problem #2: Pond color, scum, odor, algae and plant overgrowth

- Ponds that have algae covering more than 20% of the surface should have maintenance to remove it. Raking or mechanical harvesting of filamentous algae offers short-term control, but feasible long-term strategies should be considered.
- Pond maintenance companies should be relied on to identify the algae and appropriately control them. Pond specialists can control the algae growth in ponds, but its growth and reproduction are dependent on nutrients. When nutrients are in abundance, so will be the algae or vegetation.
- Plants can be used in shallow shelfs at inlets to take up nutrients, but they must be maintained and cuttings removed to take nutrients out of the pond system.
- If (non-invasive) plants are overgrown, remove or trim back excessive vegetation. Remove cuttings and trimmings. Do not allow vegetative debris to remain in the pond.
- Pond clarity and color can be impacted by excessive sediment discharge or flow shortcircuiting. For issues of clarity and color, follow the recommendations in **Section 4.7 – Sediment Buildup**.
- If invasive aquatic plants are identified, follow DEC guidelines for reporting and controlling invasives (see **Section 4.9 – Vegetation**).
- Some color, odor, and pond quality issues can be caused by leaks, spills, and other releases in the drainage area. Any petroleum odor or oily sheen (aside from natural rainbow sheen associated with decomposition of organic matter) should be reported to the appropriate state or local response agency. Other peculiar colors or odors can be investigated in collaboration with relevant agencies. Common issues are grease, paint, or other substances poured into storm drains, dumpster management, and stockpiles of various materials exposed to rainfall.

Helpful Skills:
• Ability to recognize invasive aquatic plants • Specific measures may include mechanical hand pulling, regrading (requires construction equipment), or herbicide/pesticide application *safe for aquatic environments*. • Knowledge of wetland plants and common types of algae and aquatic weeds • Knowledge of types of pond maintenance practices
Equipment Typically Used for Pool Quality Investigations
• High-top rubber boots • Canoes or small boats • Brush hook to clear vegetation and access pond bank • Secchi disk to check and compare pond color and clarity • Large-mouth bottle to collect algae and water quality samples • Various materials to control aquatic weeds and algae

Section 5. Planning for Stormwater Maintenance

Often, stormwater practices fall into disrepair because there is no plan in place for ensuring that they are maintained over time. As a result, maintenance can become reactive in nature, resulting in high costs for repairing damaged practices or practices becoming ineffective over time. This section outlines some key elements of stormwater maintenance planning, including:

1. Program models for stormwater maintenance
2. Inspection and maintenance checklists
3. Planning for the costs of stormwater maintenance
4. Identifying the need for infrequent maintenance items

5.1. Program Models for Stormwater Maintenance

The Maintenance Hierarchy concept (See Section 1) is discussed throughout this chapter, but the individuals who will conduct the Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 inspections and maintenance will vary depending on how the local program is administered. While this chapter does not focus on program elements, it is important to note that the local program requirements will influence who performs ongoing maintenance. This will play an important role in how to develop a comprehensive maintenance plan.

Although there are many options for implementing a stormwater plan, they can be described by three broad categories, including: 1) Private Maintenance; 2) Local Program; and 3) Hybrid Approach. Understanding the program in the local community will influence the best techniques for developing the maintenance plan (**Table 5.1**).

Option 1: Private Maintenance

In this option, maintenance is the responsibility of the private land owner. In regulated MS4s, however, the land owner will periodically report to the local government. In this model, it is important to ensure that the maintenance plan is very easy to understand and includes pictures of key practice elements. If possible, include a list of contractors who will be able to perform maintenance items and how much these will cost. Finally, materials should point homeowners to resources so that they can learn more about the practices on their property. DEC's Maintenance Photo Library and Training Materials webpage (link) can be useful tools for this purpose.

Option 2: Local Government Maintenance

In this option, the local government takes over maintenance responsibility for all stormwater practices. While it is still important to develop a clear and simple plan, the designer can assume some level of training or supervision for the individuals conducting inspections and maintenance. For publicly maintained practices, it is helpful to find out what resources the local government has in place for developing the plan. These resources may be in the form of existing reporting and tracking procedures, which can be modified for the specific practice, or equipment such as vacuum sweepers. Maintenance access should be made available to local government staff through official easements.

Option 3: Hybrid Approach

In the hybrid approach to stormwater maintenance, larger practices or practices on public land are maintained by the local government, and smaller practices on private property are maintained by the owner. There are other hybrid models, however. For example, the local government may take responsibility for inspections but leave the owner responsible for maintenance items identified during the inspection.

Table 5.1 Maintenance Considerations for Three Program Options

Program Option	Inspection/Maintenance Performed By:	Key Considerations for the Designer
Option 1: Private	Level 1: Property owner or HOA Level 2: Private Contractor Level 3: Certified Contractor	Make the plan very simple and graphic intensive. Include a list of contractors if applicable. Provide links to educational materials.
Option 2: Local Program	Level 1: Interns or Untrained Staff Level 2: Trained Local Staff Level 3: City/Town Engineer or other individual hired by the city or town	Learn about the resources the local program has at its disposal. If government staff are being trained, develop a maintenance plan that is consistent with their knowledge and understanding. Be aware of equipment and materials on hand in this community.
Option 3: Hybrid Approach	Inspection is typically divided, where larger practices or those on private property are maintained by the public entity.	Understand how this maintenance is divided, and develop a plan that is consistent with this arrangement.

Special Considerations for Green Infrastructure Practices

Because many of the Green Infrastructure practices included in this manual, such as Tree Planting, Rain Gardens and Sheetflow and Level Spreaders, are implemented at a very small scale, they present a unique challenge in terms of stormwater maintenance. These practices are more likely to be located on private property. As a result, the designer needs to consider the *Private Maintenance* model. Maintenance plans for these small practices should be as simple as possible, and the designer should ensure that maintenance can be completed with readily available materials.

5.2. Inspection and Maintenance Checklists and Documentation

The checklists included in this chapter are specific to the maintenance hierarchy. The maintenance plan should include inspection checklists for all three hierarchies. In addition, these checklists should be modified to identify the specific practice elements included in each design. The materials developed as a part of the maintenance plan should be provided to the practice owner and local government. (See **Table 5.2**)

Table 5.2. Customizing Checklists and Guidance

Hierarchy	Checklist/Checklist Guidance	Tips for Customizing
Level 1	**Section 2** includes both the checklists and guidance.	Add photographs of the practice (once installed), and include a simple aerial photograph of the site to locate the practice. Include key local government contacts and contractors along with the checklist.
Level 2	**Section 3** includes guidance on how to respond to the Level 1 Inspection and/or activate a Level 3 investigation. **Appendix XX** includes routine inspection checklists for the Level 2 Inspector.	Modify to remove elements that are not in this particular practice.
Level 3	Guidance is included in **Sections 3 a 4**. Checklists are included in **Appendix XX**.	Typically, this will not need to be modified.

5.3. Budgeting for Maintenance

A maintenance plan should include a budget for annual maintenance. In the Public Maintenance model, a single entity (the local government) will be responsible for maintenance of many practices, so the cost of maintenance for an individual practice may not be as important as estimating the average cost of maintenance across all practices. For privately maintained practices, on the other hand, it is very helpful to develop a cost estimate that is as accurate as possible for the specific location. As a result, two options for estimating costs are presented here, including:

- **Option 1**: Average or Unit Costs
  Generalized cost data are used to estimate an annual cost. This option may be used for a municipality or other institution that manages a large number of practices.
- **Option 2:** Detailed Individual Practice Budget
  Annual costs are estimated using more detailed practice information, as well as more detailed estimates of labor and materials costs.

Option 1: Average or Unit Costs

In this option, annual maintenance costs are estimated on a per-acre basis or based on a percentage of the construction costs. These prices typically range from about 1% to 4% of the construction costs (King and Hagan, 2011; **Table 5.3**).

Table 5.3 Typical Maintenance Costs (Source: King and Hagan, 2011; Adjusted to 2015 Costs)

Practice	Annual Maintenance Cost (% of Construction)	Annual Maintenance Cost ($/cubic foot of the water quality volume–WQV—treated)
Buffers	4%	$0.25-$0.35
Tree Planting	4%	$0.35
Ponds and Wetlands	4%	$0.22-$0.35
Infiltration Trench/ Basin	2%	$0.25
Filtering Practices	4%	$0.41-$0.47
Bioretention	4%	$0.44
Swales	3%	$0.18-$0.26
Permeable Pavement	1%	$0.64-$0.89

While the costs in **Table 5.3** may be a reasonable starting point, it is important to note that the actual data will vary greatly, depending on labor rates and materials costs. For example, the hourly “Open Shop” labor rate for rough grading is approximately $27/hour in Elmira and $38/hour in New York City (Means, 2015). In addition, costs for labor, materials and equipment will vary depending on the maintenance arrangement (**Table 5.4**).

Table 5.4 Variability in Maintenance Costs Based on Maintenance Arrangement			
Maintenance Arrangement	**Labor**	**Materials**	**Equipment**
Public Maintenance (Municipality)	Level 1: Intern Wage Level 2: Staff Salary Level 3: Professional Staff or Contractor	Low: Materials bought in bulk.	Low: Typically owned by Public Works or similar department.
Private Maintenance (Homeowner)	Level 1: Homeowner (Free) or Contractor Level 2: Private Landscaper or Contractor Level 3: Professional Contractor	High: Materials purchased in small quantities.	High: Specialized equipment needs to be rented if needed.
Private Maintenance (Commercial or HOA)	Level 1: Free (with HOA volunteers) or Contracted Labor Rate Level 2: Private Landscaper or Contractor Level 3: Professional Contractor	Varies: Materials may be bought in bulk or on a small scale, depending on the size of the private entity.	High: Specialized equipment needs to be rented if needed.

Option 2: Site-Based Costs

Because both the unit costs of labor and materials and the average annual costs of maintenance can be so highly variable, more detailed data will be needed to estimate costs at a particular site. One approach for estimating these costs is to generate a list of routine maintenance items, along with associated unit costs for labor, materials and equipment. **Appendix XX** of this manual includes estimated time and associated materials for routine maintenance of each of the major SMPs, as well as notes regarding typical equipment and maintenance materials.

In addition, a Maintenance Cost Estimation Tool is available on DEC's website at "link". This approach requires the user to enter basic design data for the practice, as well as information regarding local labor rates and other general costs. In the bioretention example below, unit costs are used to estimate routine maintenance costs, including inspections and regular maintenance.

Example Annual Cost Estimation: Bioretention

An example cost estimation for a bioretention cell follows below. The cost estimation tool used in the Maintenance Chapter will be automated. This example demonstrates how the unit cost and typical frequency data in **Appendix XX** will be used to estimate average annual maintenance costs. In it, we are estimating annual maintenance costs for a bioretention practice with characteristics summarized in **Table 5.5**. **Table 5.6** then summarizes activities, their frequency and extent, and associated labor costs.

Using the assumptions for this practice, the annual costs for routine maintenance would be $1,828 ($1.15/cubic foot of Water Quality Volume) in the first year and $1,468 ($0.90/cf WQv) in subsequent years. This value is much higher than the $0.44/cf estimated using general cost data (**Table 5.3**). However, significant cost savings could be realized by using volunteer or intern-level labor for Level 1 inspections and routine maintenance.

Table 5.5. Assumptions for Bioretention Cost Example

Practice Design		**Unit Costs**	
Water Quality Volume (cf)	1,600	Level 1 Labor ($/hr)	$15
Forebay Volume (cf)	400	Level 2 Labor ($/hr)	$35
Total Practice Area (sf)	2,000	Mulch ($/cy)	$10
Filter Area (sf)	1,000	Plants ($/plant)	$1
Ponding Area (sf)	1,500	Trash Tipping Fee	$25
Slope Area (sf)	500	Seed/Mulch for a small area	$10
Turf Area (sf)	No Turf	Average Cost for a PVC Replacement Part (Planning Level)	$100
Inlets (#)	1		

Table 5.6. Bioretention Example - Routine Maintenance Costs

Task	Frequency (x/year, Decimal)	Typical Extent	Extent	Hours (Unit)	Hours/yr	Level	Materials and Equipment	Annual Costs		
								Labor	Materials and Equipment	Total
Level 1 Inspection - 1 to 5-acre drainage	1	Practice	1	1 per inspection	1	1		$15		$15
Level 2 Inspection - 1 to 5-acre drainage	0.2	Practice	1	2 per inspection	0.4	2		$14		$14
Watering - grass and plants: Year 1	16	Weekly for first growing season, over filter surface area	1,000	0.5 per 400 sf area	24	1	Assume minimal cost for water	$360		$360
Trash and Debris Removal	4	Ponding area	1,500	1 per 400 sf practice surface area	15	1	Assume $25 Tipping Fee for Each Trip	$225	$100	$325
Weeding	2	Assume 50% of practice area	1,000	4 per 400 sf practice surface area	20	1		$300		$300
Mulching	1	Ponding area	1,500	4 per 400 sf area	15	1	Bark mulch; assume 15 cy/application	$225	$150	$375
Sediment Removal (minor)	1	Assume one small area per inlet	1	1 per small area	1	1		$15		$15
Erosion Repair (minor)	1	Inlets; assume 25 sf/practice	25	1 per 25 sf	1	1	Seed, mulch and topsoil	$15	$10	$25
Erosion Repair (minor)	1	10% of slope area	50	1 per 25 sf	2	1	Seed, mulch and topsoil	$30	$20	$40
Minor Regrading	0.5	1 spot per 400 sf of practice area	5	1 per repair	2.5	2	Assume done by hand	$88		$88
Planting (plants)	0.2	Assume 50% of practice area	1,000	8 per200 sf	8	1	Assume 500 plants/planting	$120	$100	$220
Minor PVC or Metal Repairs (observation well cap, PVC riser, grates)	0.2	1 per practice	1	1 per repair	0.2	2	Assume about a $100 piece of equipment	$7	$20	$27
Sediment Removal (small forebay)	0.2	per forebay	1	2 per forebay	0.4	2	Assume removal by hand	$14		$14
							Total Costs - Year 1	**$1,428**	**$400**	**$1,828**
							Total Costs - Subsequent Years	**$1,068**	**$400**	**$1,468**

5.4. Planning for “Non-Routine” Maintenance

If the guidance provided in this chapter is followed and practices are designed properly, the routine maintenance (and budget guidance in **Section 5.3**) should be sufficient to keep a practice functioning indefinitely, but planning is needed for infrequent maintenance items. In the initial maintenance plan, identify a few of the most likely infrequent items. (Tables in **Appendix XX** identify these items, as does the Budgeting Tool.) If initial routine inspections start to identify a more serious problem, develop a plan and budget for performing the repairs. To be more conservative, another option is to provide a contingency budget to plan for non-routine repairs over the life of the practice.

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