

Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance Fact Sheet

Bioretention Facilities and Flow-Through Planters

These facilities remove pollutants primarily by filtering runoff slowly through an active layer of soil. Routine maintenance is needed to ensure that flow is unobstructed, that erosion is prevented, and that soils are held together by plant roots and are biologically active.

► GENERAL MAINTENANCE RULES

At no time will synthetic pesticides or fertilizers be applied, nor will any soil amendments, other than aged compost mulch or sand/compost mix, be introduced. The top of soil surface will be maintained at or near the design elevation throughout. Irrigation systems will be maintained to conserve water while maintaining plant health.

Although it is unlikely to be needed, if plants are not thriving compost tea may be applied at a recommended rate of 5 gallons mixed with 15 gallons of water per acre, up to once per year between March and June. Compost tea will not be applied when temperatures are below 50°F or above 90°F or when rain is forecast within the next 48 hours.

The following may be applied for pest control if needed:

- Beneficial nematodes
- Safer® products
- Neem oil

If mosquito larvae are present and persistent, contact the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District for information and advice. Mosquito larvicides should be applied only when absolutely necessary and then only by a licensed individual or contractor.

► ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

The facilities will be examined [daily for commercial; weekly for residential] for visible trash, and trash will be removed. Any graffiti, vandalism, or other damage will be noted and addressed within 48 hours.

The planted areas will be weeded by hand approximately monthly. At this time, plants will be inspected for health and the irrigation system will be turned on manually and checked for any leaks or broken lines, misdirected spray patterns etc. Any dead plants will be replaced.

► FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT RAIN EVENTS

A significant rain event is one that produces approximately a half-inch or more rainfall in a 24-hour period. Within 24 hours after each such event, the following will be conducted:

- The surface of the facility will be observed to confirm ponding is not prolonged.
- The surface of the mulch layer will be inspected for movement of material. Mulch will be replaced and raked smooth if needed.
- Inlets will be inspected, and any accumulations of trash or debris will be removed. Any erosion at inlets should be restored to grade.

- Side slopes, if any, will be inspected for evidence of instability or erosion, and corrections will be made as necessary.
- Check dams will be inspected for movement and corrections made as necessary.
- Outlet structures will be inspected for any obstructions.

► PRIOR TO THE START OF THE RAINY SEASON

In September of each year, facility inlets and outlets [including flow-control orifices, if any] will be inspected to confirm there is no accumulation of debris that would block flow. Stormwater should drain freely into the bioretention facilities.

If not previously addressed during monthly maintenance, any growth and spread of plantings that blocks inlets or the movement of runoff across the surface of the facility will be cut back or removed.

► ANNUALLY DURING WINTER

Once, in December – February of each year, vegetation will be cut back as needed, debris removed, and plants and mulch replaced as needed. The concrete work will be inspected for damage. The elevation of the top of soil and mulch layer will be confirmed to be consistent with the 6-inch reservoir depth.