

Inspecting Your BMP



Inspecting your BMP allows you to detect problems early and to avoid long term problems. It is also usually a requirement of your maintenance agreement. Inspection requirements vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction depending on the specific BMP. Some sand filtration systems require monthly inspections while other BMPs can be inspected on a yearly basis. Some localities provide inspections of all facilities while others require that the responsible party arrange for an inspection and send the results for confirmation. **Your local government should be contacted to determine specific requirements and if you need help in selecting a qualified inspector.**



INSPECTIONS. Regular inspections will save headaches and money.

It is unlikely that your lawn care or landscaping company has the know-how or experience to perform a proper, comprehensive BMP inspection. A professional (engineer, landscape architect, surveyor, etc.), or someone who has had appropriate training, should be hired to perform inspections. Since there is no "BMP inspection" listing in the telephone book, call your local government for advice on who to contact and how.

SELF EVALUATION AND WHEN TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL

The development of problems may not coincide with a visit from an inspector – particularly if there are out of the ordinary circumstances. Communities and businesses are encouraged to perform frequent self inspections. It is useful to have an original site plan on hand to help orient yourself. A self inspection should be able to check for:

- unexpected ponding;
- health of vegetation or growth of unwanted vegetation;
- obstructions of the inlet or outlet;
- excessive erosion or sedimentation;
- signs of dumping or pollutants other than sediment;
- cracking or settling of the BMP's structural components;
- wetness on the downstream side of the dam (indicating seepage);
- low spots or sinkholes in bottom areas;
- deterioration of pipes;
- condition of the emergency spillway;
- condition of fences;
- shore erosion;
- stability of the side-slopes and downstream channel conditions; and,
- signs of vandalism.

Inspection of underground systems such as sand filtration systems or infiltration trenches are obviously more difficult. A non-professional should never enter confined spaces meant for maintenance personnel. However, the facility owner should look for:

- water remaining in the system longer than design draw down time;
- obvious signs of excessive sediment build up or debris around the facility; and,
- signs of disturbance of manholes or damage to the structure caused by vehicles or settling.

Depending on the problem, either bring it to the attention of your landscape company or contact a professional BMP inspector.

Sample Self Inspection Checklist



STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

Yes No N/A
Does the facility show signs of settling, cracking, bulging, misalignment, or other structural deterioration?

Yes No N/A
Do embankments, emergency spillways, side slopes, or inlet/outlet structures show signs of excessive erosion?

Yes No N/A
Is the outlet pipe damaged or otherwise not functioning properly?

Yes No N/A
Do impoundment and inlet areas show erosion, low spots, or lack of stabilization?

Yes No N/A
Are trees or saplings present on the embankment?

Yes No N/A
Are animal burrows present?

Yes No N/A
Are contributing areas unstabilized with evidence of erosion?

Yes No N/A
Do grassed areas require mowing and/or are clippings building up?

WORKING CONDITIONS

Yes No N/A
Does the depth of sediment or other factors suggest a loss of storage volume?

Yes No N/A
Is there standing water in inappropriate areas?

Yes No N/A
Is there an accumulation of floating debris and/or trash?

OTHER INSPECTION ITEMS

Yes No N/A
Is there evidence of encroachments or improper use of impounded areas?

Yes No N/A
Are there signs of vandalism?

Yes No N/A
Do the fence, gate, lock, or other safety devices need repair?

Yes No N/A
Is there excessive algae growth, or has one type of vegetation taken over the facility?

Yes No N/A
Is there evidence of oil, grease, or other automotive fluids entering and clogging the facility?

Yes No N/A
In rain garden BMPs, is there evidence of soil erosion, does mulch cover the entire area, are specified number and types of plants still in place, or is there evidence of disease or plant stress from inadequate or too much watering?

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

A yes answer to any of these items should result in corrective action or a call to a professional inspector.