Soil BMP Requirements

in the WA State DOE Stormwater Manual,
and in local codes around western Washington

From the State manual to local codes – how it works

The "best management practices" (BMPs) in the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* are taking effect as town and county governments around western Washington update their local stormwater codes. These local updates are required to comply with NPDES ("National Pollution Discharge Elimination System") municipal stormwater permits, which are issued by DOE as required by the federal Clean Water Act.

Washington State's Soil BMP

BMP T5.13 in the WDOE *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* requires preserving site topsoil and vegetation where possible, reducing soil compaction, and amending disturbed soils with compost to restore healthy soil functions.

Read the State Soil BMP (2 pages)
BMP T5.13 Post Construction Soil Quality & Depth:

- See Summary on right of www.SoilsforSalmon.org
- It is also on page 4-5 of the *Building Soil* manual, on www.SoilsforSalmon.org

The complete DOE *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* is available online at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/manual.html
BMP T5.13 is on pages 5-13 to 5-15 in Volume 5, "Runoff Treatment BMPs" which also includes flow credits for using the BMPs.

Where are the Soil BMPs required by code?

Most western Washington towns and counties have updated their local stormwater codes, as required by their municipal stormwater permits from the State DOE. They are including soil best practices equivalent to the State's BMP T5.13 "Post Construction Soil Quality and Depth," which help protect local waterways and downstream property owners while giving new homeowners the healthy landscapes they are asking for.

Most jurisdictions already require Soil BMPs – *in their building permitting process*

- **King County** in Clearing and Grading regulations
  See video, permit requirements, guide, and compost calculator at
  www.kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/programs/green-building/home-builders-owners/soil-standard
- **City of Seattle** in Stormwater Manual, volume 3: Project Stormwater Control, chapter 5.1 Soil Amendment BMP, at http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codesrules/codes/stormwater/ and http://www.seattle.gov/util/GreenInfrastructure
- **Most other cities around Puget Sound** have updated their codes to include the soil BMP, or are in the process – check with your local jurisdiction or permitting agency.

Soil BMP Summary – *5 Steps to Building Healthy Soil*

1) Retain and protect native topsoil & vegetation where practical
2) Restore disturbed soils, to restore healthy soil functions, by:
   - stockpiling & reusing good quality site soil, or
   - tilling 2-3" of compost into poor site soils, or
   - bringing in 8" of compost-amended topsoil
3) Loosen compacted subsoil, if needed, by ripping to 12" depth
4) Mulch landscape beds after planting
5) Protect restored soils from erosion or re-compaction by heavy equipment

Building Soil
Foundation for Success

Learn more at **www.SoilsforSalmon.org**