



City of Oceanside
Engineering Inspection
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Prioritization of Regulated Construction Projects

Should a project involve disturbance of soil or have the potential to pose a significant threat to Urban Runoff, the project will be subject to additional requirements to prevent pollutants from being discharged from the site. All Non-Exempt Regulated Construction Projects must be assigned one of three priorities (High, Medium, or Low) with respect to the threat the site poses to Urban Runoff water quality. Based on the assigned priority, the project proponent will be able to determine the SWPPP and BMP requirements for the subject project.

In order to determine the prioritization of a project, it is necessary to characterize the site with regards to size, planned period of grading, vicinity to environmentally sensitive water bodies, project type, erosion potential, and potential to produce non-storm water or polluted discharges. To guide the project proponent through this process, and to assist the City in reviewing the project, a Project Urban Runoff Threat Assessment Form must be completed and submitted with the project's SWPPP. This form is available at the Engineering and Building counters at City Hall, 300 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054, (760) 435-5097. A short explanation and directions for completing each section of the form are presented below.

Instructions to Complete the Urban Runoff Threat Assessment Form

Item 1—Project Size

The total amount of disturbed area of a Regulated Construction Project site is important in determining what threat a site poses to Urban Runoff quality. As the size of the project is increased, so is the area of disturbed soil exposed to storm water runoff. In addition, the larger the site, the more time required to deploy necessary BMPs in the case of a predicted storm event.

All projects that are 50 acres or more must be considered a High Priority if grading activities will occur during the wet season (October 1 to April 30). Project sites greater than five acres and directly adjacent to or discharging to environmentally sensitive water bodies, must also be considered High Priority.

In the space provided for Item 1, the proponent should enter the estimated total disturbed acreage of the Regulated Construction Project.

Item 2—Planned Period of Grading

The time of the year that a project is to be graded has a direct effect on its potential to discharge pollutants. The State Water Resources Control Board has designated the period between October 1 and April 30 as the "wet season." Between these dates, the probability that a significant rainfall event will take place is high enough to warrant the requirement that additional physical BMPs be installed on a project in order to ensure that pollutants from the site entering the storm drain system are reduced to the MEP.

In the space provided in Item 2, the proponent is to enter “Yes” if grading activities will take place on the project during the wet season, and enter “No” if grading activities will not be performed during the wet season.

Grading activities are defined as any land disturbance activities such as, but not limited to, clearing, digging, soil movement, and excavation. The duration of a grading activity is defined as the period of time beginning from the first occurrence of land disturbance until all land disturbed has been permanently protected from transport through pavement, other construction, landscaping, vegetation, or other methods, and all spoils and stockpiles have been permanently protected from transport or properly recycled or discarded. Therefore, in some cases, the actual land disturbance activities may not be occurring during the wet season, but if the soils have not been permanently secured, the grading activity is still considered as occurring.

Item 3—Vicinity of the Project to Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Regulated Construction Project sites that are five acres or more, and directly adjacent to (within 200 feet), or tributary to an environmentally sensitive area (ESA) must be considered High Priority. Due to the sensitive nature of these water bodies however, any site five acres and less and meeting this criteria must be considered to be of Medium Priority. Nine ESAs within the watersheds of the City have been identified. They are as follows:

- Pacific Ocean
- Oceanside Harbor
- Buena Vista Lagoon
- Agua Hedionda Lagoon
- San Luis Rey River
- Loma Alta Creek
- Buena Vista Creek
- Pilgrim Creek
- Guajome Lake

Maps depicting these ESAs within the City and the adjacent and tributary areas surrounding each ESA are available at the Engineering Counter at City Hall. In order to determine if a site is adjacent to or tributary to an environmentally sensitive water body, the project proponent will need to reference these maps and locate the project on the maps. If any portion of the Regulated Construction Project site falls within one of the areas delineated on the maps, the project must be considered adjacent to or tributary to an ESA within the City.

In the space provided in Item 3, the proponent is to enter “Yes” or “No” as to whether the Regulated Construction Project was found to be adjacent to or tributary to an ESA.

Item 4—Presence of Significant Erodible Slopes

The presence of significant slopes on a project site affects the project’s potential to introduce sediment to the City’s Storm Water Conveyance System. Runoff on the face of the slopes has the potential to obtain sufficient velocity to cause significant erosion and carry large amounts of sediment into the Storm Water Conveyance System. Using Table 1, the project proponent is to determine whether slopes considered to be significantly erodible are present on the site.

In the space provided in Item 4, the proponent is to indicate either “Yes” or “No” as to the presence of significant erodible slopes on the project site.

Table 1. Presence of Significant Erodible Slopes

Anticipated Period of Grading	Slope 1:20 to 1:4 (V:H)		Slope Steeper Than 1:4 (V:H)		Overall Project Profile Steeper Than 1:20
	Height Greater Than 6 ft and Less than 12 ft	Height Greater or Equal to 12 ft	Height Greater Than 4 ft and Less Than 6 ft	Height Greater Than or Equal to 6 ft	
Wet Season: October 1 to April 30	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dry Season: May 1 to September 30	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Note: This table was adapted from Table 30-1 of the Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbook, Construction Contractor's Guide and Specifications, April 1997.

Item 5—Potential to Produce Significant Non-Storm Water Discharges or Pollutants

In evaluating the priority that a site should have during construction activities, it is important to consider the types of non-storm water discharges or pollutants that have the potential to be discharged during construction activities. Examples of activities that may produce significant non-storm water discharges, or materials that pose a significant threat to introduce pollutants to Urban Runoff that are commonly found on construction sites include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Soil amendments
- Fertilizers
- Concrete Wastes
- Wastewater as a result of Dewatering Activities
- Construction Materials and Compounds
- Types of Machinery Onsite
- Equipment Maintenance and Fueling
- Sanitary and Septic Waste Facilities

In Item 5 of the form, the project proponent should evaluate the project with regards to the items presented above, and any other activity or item which may produce non-storm water runoff or significant pollutants on the project. The project proponent is instructed to record “Yes” or “No” in the space provided as to whether the project has the potential to produce significant non-storm water runoff or pollutants. If an answer of “Yes” is recorded, then the proponent is to provide a brief description of those activities that may produce non-storm water runoff or pollutants. If an answer of “No” is recorded, then the proponent is to provide a brief statement stating that no construction activity will take place that will produce significant non-storm water runoff, and/or that no materials used or stored onsite will pose a significant threat to pollute storm water being discharged from the site.

Item 6—Project Type

It is not necessarily the type of project that has a bearing on the potential to degrade water quality during construction, but the impact of the construction activities and the increase in impervious surfaces that are the real factors. Large areas of planned impervious surface generally create large areas of exposed soil, which will need to be drained during storm events. The drainage from storms will generally travel across these areas at increased velocities, and have the potential to cause significant erosion and sediment travel. For the purposes of prioritization of a proposed project, any project creating more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface is considered to have a significant threat to Urban Runoff quality.

In the space provided in Item 6, the project proponent is instructed to record the amount of impervious surface to be created, and answer “Yes” or “No” as to whether the project will create more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface.

Item 7—Project Specific Prioritization

Using the information recorded in Items 1 through 6 on the Project Urban Runoff Threat Assessment Form the project proponent is instructed to evaluate the project’s overall threat to Urban Runoff quality using Table 2. Based on the size of the project recorded in Item 1, the proponent enters Table 2 at the left-hand side, on the appropriate row. The next step is to evaluate the project by proceeding to the next column containing a priority. If an answer of “Yes” was recorded in the corresponding item of the Project Urban Water Threat Assessment Form, then the project is considered to be of the priority listed in that space. If an answer of “No” was recorded in the corresponding item of the form, then the proponent moves to the next column and repeats the process. If an answer of “No” was recorded for all items on the form, pertaining to columns 2 through 5 of the table, then the proponent records the project as the default priority listed in the final column.

In the space provided in Item 7, the project proponent is to indicate the assigned priority for the project.

The proponent is required to submit the completed Project Urban Runoff Threat Assessment Form. The City Engineering Department will review the completed Project Urban Runoff Threat Assessment Form and the assigned prioritization. Should the City find that the prioritization assigned by the project proponent is erroneous, the assigned prioritization will be revised accordingly.

Table 2. Project Prioritization Matrix

Project Size	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Default Priority
Greater than 50 acres	High	High	High	High	High	Medium
5–50 acres	Medium	High	High	High	High	Medium
1–5 acres	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Less than 1 acre	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low