



Description and Purpose

Dewatering operations are practices that manage the discharge of pollutants when non-stormwater and accumulated precipitation must be removed from a work location so that construction work may be accomplished.

Suitable Applications

These practices are implemented for discharges of non-stormwater from construction sites. Non-stormwaters include, but are not limited to, groundwater, water from cofferdams, water diversions, and waters used during construction activities that must be removed from a work area.

Practices identified in this section are also appropriate for implementation when managing the removal of accumulated precipitation (stormwater) from depressed areas at a construction site.

Limitations

- Site conditions will dictate design and use of dewatering operations.
- The controls discussed in this best management practice (BMP) address sediment only.
- The controls detailed in this BMP only allow for minimal settling time for sediment particles. Use only when site conditions restrict the use of the other control methods.
- Dewatering operations will require, and must comply with, applicable local permits.

Objectives

EC	Erosion Control	
SE	Sediment Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TR	Tracking Control	
WE	Wind Erosion Control	
NS	Non-Stormwater Management Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WM	Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control	

Legend:

- ☒ Primary Objective
- ☒ Secondary Objective

Targeted Constituents

Sediment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nutrients	
Trash	
Metals	
Bacteria	
Oil and Grease	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organics	

Potential Alternatives

- SE-5: Fiber Roll
- SE-6: Gravel Bag Berm
- SE-9: Straw Bale Barrier



- Avoid dewatering discharges where possible by using the water for dust control, by infiltration, etc.

Implementation

- Dewatering non-stormwater cannot be discharged without prior notice to and approval from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and local stormwater management agency. This includes stormwater that is co-mingled with groundwater or other non-stormwater sources. Once the discharge is allowed, appropriate BMPs must be implemented to ensure the discharge complies with all permit requirements and regional and watershed-specific requirements.
- RWQCB may require a separate NPDES permit prior to the dewatering discharge of non-stormwater. These permits will have specific testing, monitoring, and discharge requirements and can take significant time to obtain.
- The flow chart shown in Figure 1 should be utilized to guide dewatering operations.
- The owner will coordinate monitoring and permit compliance.
- Additional permits or permissions from other agencies may be required for dewatering cofferdams or diversions.
- Dewatering discharges must not cause erosion at the discharge point.

A variety of methods can be used to treat water during dewatering operations. Several devices are presented below and provide options to achieve sediment removal. The size of particles present in the sediment and Permit or receiving water limitations on sediment are key considerations for selecting sediment treatment option(s); in some cases, the use of multiple devices may be appropriate.

Sediment Basin (see also SE-2)***Description:***

- A sediment basin is a temporary basin with a controlled release structure that is formed by excavation or construction of an embankment to detain sediment-laden runoff and allow sediment to settle out before discharging. Sediment basins are generally larger than Sediment Traps (SE-3).

Appropriate Applications:

- Effective for the removal of gravel, sand, silt, some metals that settle out with the sediment, and trash.

Implementation:

- Excavation and construction of related facilities is required.
- Temporary sediment basins must be fenced if safety is a concern.
- Outlet protection is required to prevent erosion at the outfall location.

Maintenance:

- Maintenance is required for safety fencing, vegetation, embankment, inlet and outfall structures, as well as other features.
- Removal of sediment is required when the storage volume is reduced by one-half.

Sediment Trap (See also SE-3)

Description:

- A sediment trap is a temporary basin formed by excavation and/or construction of an earthen embankment across a waterway or low drainage area to detain sediment-laden runoff and allow sediment to settle out before discharging. Sediment traps are generally smaller than Sediment Basins (SE-2).

Appropriate Applications:

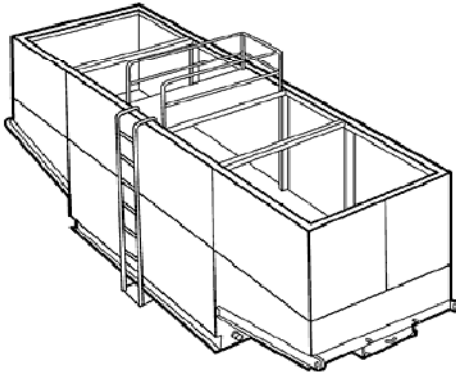
Effective for the removal of large and medium sized particles (sand and gravel) and some metals that settle out with the sediment.

Implementation:

- Excavation and construction of related facilities is required.
- Trap inlets should be located to maximize the travel distance to the trap outlet.
- Use rock or vegetation to protect the trap outlets against erosion.

Maintenance:

- Maintenance is required for vegetation, embankment, inlet and outfall structures, as well as other features.
- Removal of sediment is required when the storage volume is reduced by one-third.

Weir Tanks***Description:***

- A weir tank separates water and waste by using weirs. The configuration of the weirs (over and under weirs) maximizes the residence time in the tank and determines the waste to be removed from the water, such as oil, grease, and sediments.

Appropriate Applications:

- The tank removes trash, some settleable solids (gravel, sand, and silt), some visible oil and grease, and some metals (removed with sediment). To achieve high levels of flow, multiple tanks can be used in parallel. If additional treatment is desired, the tanks can be placed in series or as pre-treatment for other methods.

Implementation:

- Tanks are delivered to the site by the vendor, who can provide assistance with set-up and operation.
- Tank size will depend on flow volume, constituents of concern, and residency period required. Vendors should be consulted to appropriately size tank.

Maintenance:

- Periodic cleaning is required based on visual inspection or reduced flow.
- Oil and grease disposal must be by licensed waste disposal company.

Dewatering Tanks



Description:

- A dewatering tank removes debris and sediment. Flow enters the tank through the top, passes through a fabric filter, and is discharged through the bottom of the tank. The filter separates the solids from the liquids.

Appropriate Applications:

- The tank removes trash, gravel, sand, and silt, some visible oil and grease, and some metals (removed with sediment). To achieve high levels of flow, multiple tanks can be used in parallel. If additional treatment is desired, the tanks can be placed in series or as pre-treatment for other methods.

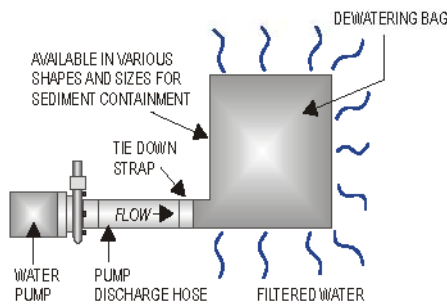
Implementation:

- Tanks are delivered to the site by the vendor, who can provide assistance with set-up and operation.
- Tank size will depend on flow volume, constituents of concern, and residency period required. Vendors should be consulted to appropriately size tank.

Maintenance:

- Periodic cleaning is required based on visual inspection or reduced flow.
- Oil and grease disposal must be by licensed waste disposal company.

Gravity Bag Filter



Description:

- A gravity bag filter, also referred to as a dewatering bag, is a square or rectangular bag made of non-woven geotextile fabric that collects sand, silt, and fines.

Appropriate Applications:

- Effective for the removal of sediments (gravel, sand, and silt). Some metals are removed with the sediment.

Implementation:

- Water is pumped into one side of the bag and seeps through the bottom and sides of the bag.
- A secondary barrier, such as a rock filter bed or straw/hay bale barrier, is placed beneath and beyond the edges of the bag to capture sediments that escape the bag.

Maintenance:

- Inspection of the flow conditions, bag condition, bag capacity, and the secondary barrier is required.
- Replace the bag when it no longer filters sediment or passes water at a reasonable rate.
- The bag is disposed of offsite.

Sand Media Particulate Filter



Description:

- Water is treated by passing it through canisters filled with sand media. Generally, sand filters provide a final level of treatment. They are often used as a secondary or higher level of treatment after a significant amount of sediment and other pollutants have been removed using other methods.

Appropriate Applications:

- Effective for the removal of trash, gravel, sand, and silt and some metals, as well as the reduction of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and turbidity.
- Sand filters can be used for stand-alone treatment or in conjunction with bag and cartridge filtration if further treatment is required.
- Sand filters can also be used to provide additional treatment to water treated via settling or basic filtration.

Implementation:

- The filters require delivery to the site and initial set up. The vendor can provide assistance with installation and operation.

Maintenance:

- The filters require regular service to monitor and maintain the level of the sand media. If subjected to high loading rates, filters can plug quickly.
- Vendors generally provide data on maximum head loss through the filter. The filter should be monitored daily while in use, and cleaned when head loss reaches target levels.
- If cleaned by backwashing, the backwash water may need to be hauled away for disposal, or returned to the upper end of the treatment train for another pass through the series of dewatering BMPs.

Pressurized Bag Filter



Description:

- A pressurized bag filter is a unit composed of single filter bags made from polyester felt material. The water filters through the unit and is discharged through a header. Vendors provide bag filters in a variety of configurations. Some units include a combination of bag filters and cartridge filters for enhanced contaminant removal.

Appropriate Applications:

- Effective for the removal of sediment (sand and silt) and some metals, as well as the reduction of BOD, turbidity, and hydrocarbons. Oil absorbent bags are available for hydrocarbon removal.
- Filters can be used to provide secondary treatment to water treated via settling or basic filtration.

Implementation:

- The filters require delivery to the site and initial set up. The vendor can provide assistance with installation and operation.

Maintenance:

- The filter bags require replacement when the pressure differential equals or exceeds the manufacturer's recommendation.

Cartridge Filter



Description:

- Cartridge filters provide a high degree of pollutant removal by utilizing a number of individual cartridges as part of a larger filtering unit. They are often used as a secondary or higher (polishing) level of treatment after a significant amount of sediment and other pollutants are removed. Units come with various cartridge configurations (for use in series with bag filters) or with a larger single cartridge filtration unit (with multiple filters within).

Appropriate Applications:

- Effective for the removal of sediment (sand, silt, and some clays) and metals, as well as the reduction of BOD, turbidity, and hydrocarbons. Hydrocarbons can effectively be removed with special resin cartridges.
- Filters can be used to provide secondary treatment to water treated via settling or basic filtration.

Implementation:

- The filters require delivery to the site and initial set up. The vendor can provide assistance.

Maintenance:

- The cartridges require replacement when the pressure differential equals or exceeds the manufacturer's recommendation.

Costs

- Sediment controls are low to high cost measures depending on the dewatering system that is selected. Pressurized filters tend to be more expensive than gravity settling, but are often more effective. Simple tanks are generally rented on a long-term basis (one or more months) and can range from \$360 per month for a 1,000 gallon tank to \$2,660 per month for a 10,000 gallon tank. Mobilization and demobilization costs vary considerably.

Inspection and Maintenance

- Inspect and verify that activity-based BMPs are in place prior to the commencement of associated activities. While activities associated with the BMP are under way, inspect weekly during the rainy season and at two-week intervals in the non-rainy season to verify continued BMP implementation.

- Inspect BMPs subject to non-stormwater discharges daily while non-stormwater discharges occur.
- Unit-specific maintenance requirements are included with the description of each unit.
- Sediment removed during the maintenance of a dewatering device may be either spread onsite and stabilized, or disposed of at a disposal site as approved by the owner.
- Sediment that is commingled with other pollutants must be disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and as approved by the owner.

References

Blueprint for a Clean Bay: Best Management Practices to Prevent Stormwater Pollution from Construction Related Activities; Santa Clara Valley Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, 1995.

Stormwater Quality Handbooks - Construction Site Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual, State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), November 2000.

Stormwater Management for Construction Activities, Developing Pollution Prevention Plans and Best Management Practices, EPA 832-R-92005; USEPA, April 1992.

Labor Surcharge & Equipment Rental Rates, April 1, 2002 through March 31, 2003, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

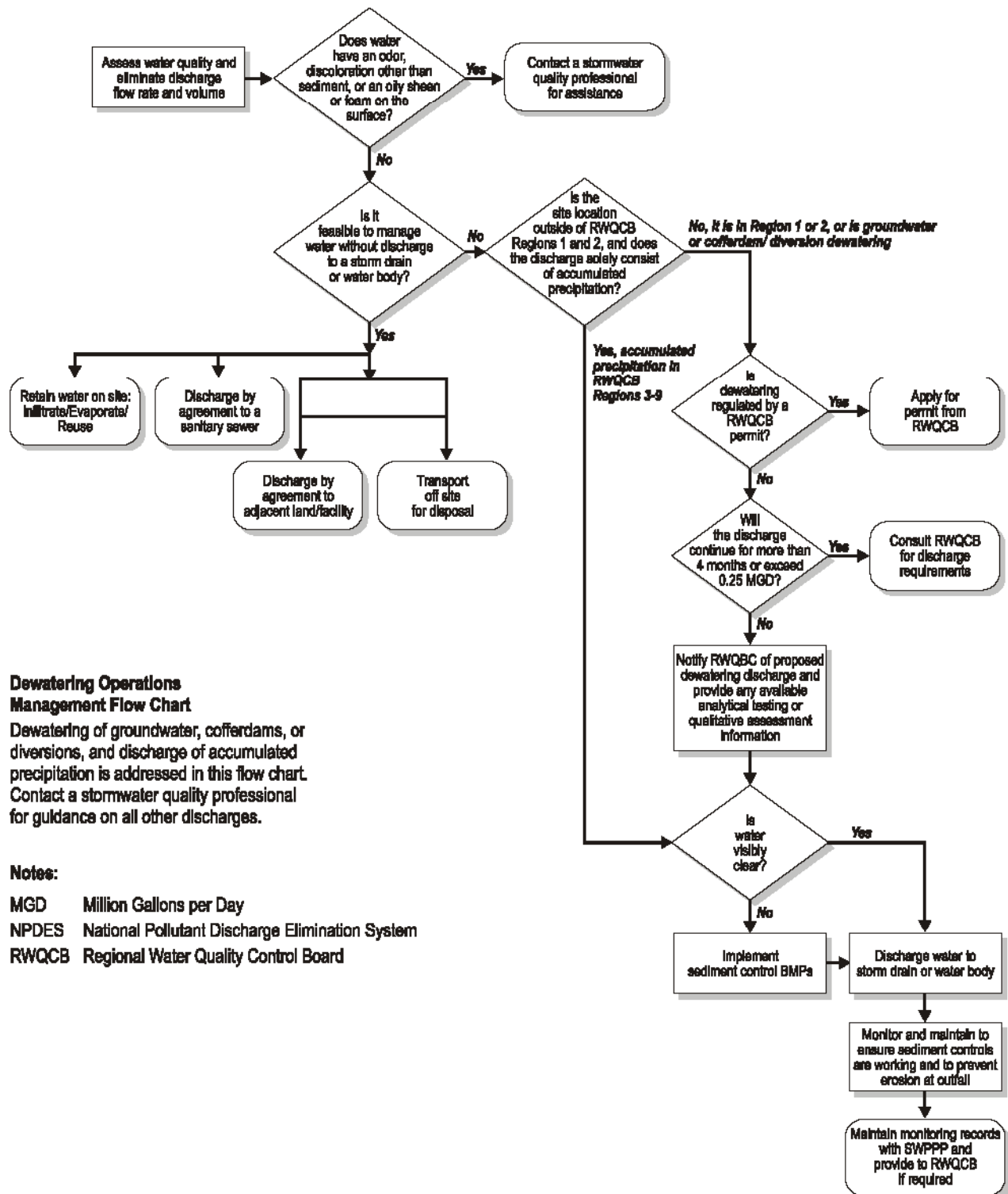


Figure 1
Operations Flow Chart