



Description and Purpose

Wind erosion or dust control consists of applying water or other dust palliatives as necessary to prevent or alleviate dust nuisance generated by construction activities. Covering small stockpiles or areas is an alternative to applying water or other dust palliatives.

Suitable Applications

Wind erosion control BMPs are suitable during the following construction activities:

- Construction vehicle traffic on unpaved roads
- Drilling and blasting activities
- Sediment tracking onto paved roads
- Soils and debris storage piles
- Batch drop from front-end loaders
- Areas with unstabilized soil
- Final grading/site stabilization

Limitations

- Watering prevents dust only for a short period and should be applied daily (or more often) to be effective.
- Over watering may cause erosion.

Objectives

EC	Erosion Control	
SE	Sediment Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TC	Tracking Control	
WE	Wind Erosion Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NS	Non-Stormwater Management Control	
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	
Organics	

Potential Alternatives

None



- Oil or oil-treated subgrade should not be used for dust control because the oil may migrate into drainageways and/or seep into the soil.
- Effectiveness depends on soil, temperature, humidity, and wind velocity.
- Chemically treated sub grades may make the soil water repellant, interfering with long-term infiltration and the vegetation/re-vegetation of the site. Some chemical dust suppressants may be subject to freezing and may contain solvents and should be handled properly.
- Asphalt, as a mulch tack or chemical mulch, requires a 24-hour curing time to avoid adherence to equipment, worker shoes, etc. Application should be limited because asphalt surfacing may eventually migrate into the drainage system.
- In compacted areas, watering and other liquid dust control measures may wash sediment or other constituents into the drainage system.

Implementation

General

California's Mediterranean climate, with short wet seasons and long hot dry seasons, allows the soils to thoroughly dry out. During these dry seasons, construction activities are at their peak, and disturbed and exposed areas are increasingly subject to wind erosion, sediment tracking and dust generated by construction equipment.

Dust control, as a BMP, is a practice that is already in place for many construction activities. Los Angeles, the North Coast, and Sacramento, among others, have enacted dust control ordinances for construction activities that cause dust to be transported beyond the construction project property line.

Recently, the State Air Resources Control Board has, under the authority of the Clean Air Act, started to address air quality in relation to inhalable particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM-10). Approximately 90 percent of these small particles are considered to be dust. Existing dust control regulations by local agencies, municipal departments, public works department, and public health departments are in place in some regions within California.

Many local agencies require dust control in order to comply with local nuisance laws, opacity laws (visibility impairment) and the requirements of the Clean Air Act. The following are measures that local agencies may have already implemented as requirements for dust control from contractors:

- Construction and Grading Permits: Require provisions for dust control plans.
- Opacity Emission Limits: Enforce compliance with California air pollution control laws.
- Increase Overall Enforcement Activities: Priority given to cases involving citizen complaints.
- Maintain Field Application Records: Require records of dust control measures from contractor;
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan: (SWPPP): Integrate dust control measures into SWPPP.

Dust Control Practices

Dust control BMPs generally stabilize exposed surfaces and minimize activities that suspend or track dust particles. The following table shows dust control practices that can be applied to site conditions that cause dust. For heavily traveled and disturbed areas, wet suppression (watering), chemical dust suppression, gravel asphalt surfacing, temporary gravel construction entrances, equipment wash-out areas, and haul truck covers can be employed as dust control applications. Permanent or temporary vegetation and mulching can be employed for areas of occasional or no construction traffic. Preventive measures would include minimizing surface areas to be disturbed, limiting onsite vehicle traffic to 15 mph, and controlling the number and activity of vehicles on a site at any given time.

SITE CONDITION	DUST CONTROL PRACTICES								
	Permanent Vegetation	Mulching	Wet Suppression (Watering)	Chemical Dust Suppression	Gravel or Asphalt	Silt Fences	Temporary Gravel Construction Entrances/Equipment Wash Down	Haul Truck Covers	Minimize Extent of Disturbed Area
Disturbed Areas not Subject to Traffic	X	X	X	X	X				X
Disturbed Areas Subject to Traffic			X	X	X		X		X
Material Stock Pile Stabilization			X	X		X			X
Demolition			X				X	X	
Clearing/Excavation			X	X		X			X
Truck Traffic on Unpaved Roads			X	X	X		X	X	
Mud/Dirt Carry Out					X		X		

Additional preventive measures include:

- Schedule construction activities to minimize exposed area (EC-1, Scheduling).
- Quickly stabilize exposed soils using vegetation, mulching, spray-on adhesives, calcium chloride, sprinkling, and stone/gravel layering.
- Identify and stabilize key access points prior to commencement of construction.
- Minimize the impact of dust by anticipating the direction of prevailing winds.
- Direct most construction traffic to stabilized roadways within the project site.
- Water should be applied by means of pressure-type distributors or pipelines equipped with a spray system or hoses and nozzles that will ensure even distribution.
- All distribution equipment should be equipped with a positive means of shutoff.
- Unless water is applied by means of pipelines, at least one mobile unit should be available at all times to apply water or dust palliative to the project.

- If reclaimed waste water is used, the sources and discharge must meet California Department of Health Services water reclamation criteria and the Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements. Non-potable water should not be conveyed in tanks or drain pipes that will be used to convey potable water and there should be no connection between potable and non-potable supplies. Non-potable tanks, pipes, and other conveyances should be marked, "NON-POTABLE WATER - DO NOT DRINK."
- Materials applied as temporary soil stabilizers and soil binders also generally provide wind erosion control benefits.
- Pave or chemically stabilize access points where unpaved traffic surfaces adjoin paved roads.
- Provide covers for haul trucks transporting materials that contribute to dust.
- Provide for wet suppression or chemical stabilization of exposed soils.
- Provide for rapid clean up of sediments deposited on paved roads. Furnish stabilized construction road entrances and vehicle wash down areas.
- Stabilize inactive construction sites using vegetation or chemical stabilization methods.
- Limit the amount of areas disturbed by clearing and earth moving operations by scheduling these activities in phases.

For chemical stabilization, there are many products available for chemically stabilizing gravel roadways and stockpiles. If chemical stabilization is used, the chemicals should not create any adverse effects on stormwater, plant life, or groundwater.

Costs

Installation costs for water and chemical dust suppression are low, but annual costs may be quite high since these measures are effective for only a few hours to a few days.

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.
- Check areas protected to ensure coverage.
- Most dust control measures require frequent, often daily, or multiple times per day attention.

References

Best Management Practices and Erosion Control Manual for Construction Sites, Flood Control District of Maricopa County, Arizona, September 1992.

California Air Pollution Control Laws, California Air Resources Board, 1992.

Caltrans, Standard Specifications, Sections 10, "Dust Control"; Section 17, "Watering"; and Section 18, "Dust Palliative".

Prospects for Attaining the State Ambient Air Quality Standards for Suspended Particulate Matter (PM₁₀), Visibility Reducing Particles, Sulfates, Lead, and Hydrogen Sulfide, California Air Resources Board, April 1991.

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