

Well, Utility, and Geotechnical Drilling

This activity applies to you if you drill water wells and utilities, environmental protection and monitoring wells, and geotechnical borings that use machinery in the drilling. It does not apply to the use of devices such as hand augers. Drilling activities have the potential to impact nearby surface water resources and underlying groundwater resources due to erosion sedimentation, and leaching of contaminants. Stormwater runoff that comes in contact with cuttings and/or spoil piles can carry suspended solids to receiving waters. If cuttings or spoil piles contain material removed from a well or boring that was drilled into contaminated subsoils, stormwater can carry those same contaminants into receiving waters. Similarly, decontamination water and water used in the drilling operation can readily carry pollutants away from the drilling site if controls are not used. Ensure that proper permits are obtained for drilling activities, and for clearing and grading the access routes and the work site. Contact the King County Department of Development and Environmental Services for information.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The following BMPs, or equivalent measures, methods or practices are required if you are engaged in mechanical drilling of wells and geotechnical drilling and directional drilling for utilities:

- 1** Determine if environmentally sensitive areas (streams, wetlands, erosion hazards, and landslide hazards) exist at or within the area of influence of the work site. For horizontal directional drilling, take measures to ensure drilling fluids are not inadvertently entering nearby storm drainage systems.
- 2** Develop and implement methods of mitigating potential impacts to surrounding areas and/or the storm drainage system. The driller must be equipped to quickly respond to unusual conditions that may arise.
- 3** Locate and prepare access roadways such that the amount of excavation and the potential for erosion is minimized. See the King County Surface Water Design Manual for information on vehicle access preparation and maintenance and erosion control measures.



Contain accumulated water and sediment on-site and direct through a geotextile filtration system (or equivalent system) before discharging to the surrounding ground surface. Keep all sediment-laden water out of storm drains and surface waters. If sediment-laden water does escape from the immediate drilling location, block any nearby catch basins using fabric, inlet protections, sand bags, erosion fences, or other similar methods. Similarly, block flow into any nearby stream or wetland, and renew efforts to retain all sediment at the drilling location.



During wet weather divert any concentrated flows of water into the site using sandbags or check dams up-slope from the site.



Dispose of soil cuttings and accumulated sediment by appropriate methods. None of this material can be dumped in or near a wetland, stream, lake, or Puget Sound. If cuttings or other soils disturbed in the drilling process are to be temporarily stockpiled on-site, they must be covered and surrounded by a berm or filter device.



See the Activity Sheet A-4, “Storage of Soil, Sand, Salt, and Other Erodible Materials”.



Stabilize exposed soils at the end of the job, using mulch or other erosion control measures.

For more information or assistance in implementing these best management practices, contact the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks Water and Land Resources Division at 206-296-1900.

Reader Note: The above requirements are the minimum required BMPs. If these BMPs fail to prevent discharges to the storm drainage system, you will be asked to take additional measures to correct the continued pollution discharges.