



Maintaining Stormwater Control Measures (SCMs)

Frequently Asked Questions

This document highlights common questions pertaining to the operation and maintenance of stormwater control measures (SCMs) and City of Boulder requirements. Owners are responsible for maintaining SCMs on their property. It is recommended that this information be shared with property managers and/or maintenance personnel responsible for landscape upkeep.

Treating Stormwater Runoff

1. Why does stormwater runoff require treatment?

Stormwater runoff is water from rain or snowmelt that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas, bare soil, and lawns. As it flows, stormwater runoff collects and transports animal waste, litter, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil & grease, soil and other potential pollutants into our local streams and rivers. Untreated stormwater runoff from your property can negatively impact habitat and recreational activities in local streams.

2. What is a Stormwater Control Measure (SCM)?

A SCM is a facility that treats stormwater runoff before it leaves a property. Examples of SCMs, also referred to as best management practices (BMPs), include extended detention basins, permeable pavement systems, bioretention areas, and underground water quality units.



Bioretention Area



Underground Water Quality Unit



Extended Detention Basin

3. How do SCMs work?

SCMs treat stormwater runoff by capturing sediment and trash in the facility or reducing the amount of runoff by infiltrating water into the ground. SCMs require maintenance to keep the facility functioning and treating runoff.

Maintaining SCMs

4. What maintenance activities do SCMs require?

The type of maintenance activities needed depends on the type of SCM. Routine maintenance activities typically involve actions such as removing sediment and trash, mowing grass, and upkeeping vegetation. Routine maintenance is needed at least on an annual basis. Rehabilitative maintenance involving replacement or repair may also be needed when facility elements break or are not functioning properly.

The City of Boulder has created recommended maintenance schedules for each SCM type available on the City Design and Construction Standards (DCS) website, see link under Question 8 below. You can also reach out to stormwaterquality@bouldercolorado.gov if you are interested in receiving a maintenance guide specific to the facilities at your property.



5. **How are SCM maintenance needs determined?**

Property owners are responsible for conducting an annual inspection for every SCM on their property. The city has prepared inspection forms for each SCM type. The inspection forms list elements that need to be checked during an inspection. Inspection forms are available on the city's Design and Construction Standards Website, see link under Question 8 below.

City of Boulder Stormwater Quality will also conduct periodic oversight inspections of SCMs and will notify the owner when corrective action is required.

6. **What happens if SCMs are not maintained?**

Failure to maintain SCMs can result in loss of function and the release of pollutants to downstream waterways. Neglecting routine maintenance can also lead to compounding issues resulting in greater long-term damage and repair costs. The city has the authority to issue enforcement action, including civil penalties and/or criminal prosecution when SCM maintenance has been neglected.

SCM Owner Responsibilities

7. **What are the responsibilities of an SCM owner?**

Owners of SCMs are required to conduct an annual inspection of SCMs and implement maintenance actions to keep the facility functioning as designed. Functioning as designed means that the facility components, size, shape, and drainage patterns remain as specified in the approved drainage report and construction drawings for the property.

Requirements of owners pertaining to the operation and maintenance of SCMs is specified in Section 11-5-6 of the Boulder Revised Code (BRC) and Chapter 7.18 of the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS).

8. **Where can I find more information?**

Further information can be found on the following City of Boulder webpages:

- **City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards:**

<https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/design-construction-standards>

SCM Inspection and Maintenance Forms can be found in DCS Stormwater Checklists and Templates, located at the bottom of the website.

- **Boulder Revised Code:**

https://library.municode.com/co/boulder/codes/municipal_code

SCM owner inspection and maintenance requirements are detailed in Section 11-5-6.