

*Permit Application Procedures and Submittal Requirements for*  
**Commercial Grading Permit**

*Knox County Code Administration & Inspection*  
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SCOPE: This document is to be used for all new commercial grading in Knox County for erosion control best management practices regulations enforcement.

## **EROSION CONTROL BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Sediment is the number one pollutant by volume in our waterways. An uncovered lot can release 30 tons per acre of soil during a large rain event. Erosion control best management practices (BMP's) are temporary measures implemented during construction to reduce the impact caused by ground-disturbing activities. BMP's must be planned to remain functional until final ground cover is established. *Inspect your erosion controls after every rain and at least once a week.*

## **PLAN IN PHASES**

Large projects should be conducted in phases. Plan ahead to remove existing vegetation only when absolutely necessary.

## **GROUND COVER**

Re-vegetation (permanent or temporary) is the best form of erosion control for any site. Plant temporary vegetation for erosion control. Non-vegetative cover (straw, matting, mulch, etc.) can be used when it is not a good time of year to start vegetation. Cover stockpiles and excavated soil with secured tarps or plastic sheeting. *Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation regulation requires temporary vegetation to be planted on sites that are idle for more than 30 days.* Plant permanent vegetation as soon as possible.

## **SEDIMENT BARRIERS**

Sediment barriers work as leaky dams causing muddy water to pool behind them and allow the soil to settle out of the water before it drains through the barrier. A single row of silt fence is needed for every 100 feet of slope length for each disturbed area. Silt fence must be trenched in the ground a minimum of 8 inches to work properly. The fence post should be at least 36 inches long and staked a minimum of 16 inches into the ground. They should be set on 5-foot centers. Silt fences are only effective if placed along the contours of the landscape. Storm drains need to be protected by a sediment barrier until permanent ground cover is established.

## **CONSTRUCTION ENTRANCE**

Construction side entrances need to be designed to prevent soil from leaving the site. A gravel construction entrance built to specifications can significantly reduce the amount of soil leaving the site. Gravel entrances need to be a minimum of 100 feet in length and have a minimum depth of 6 inches.

## DIVERSION CHANNELS/CHECK DAMS

Diversion dikes route storm water runoff around disturbed areas. Diversion channels should be stabilized with grass, riprap, sod, etc. Small check dams placed in diversion channels help reduce runoff velocities and allow soils to deposit.

## SEDIMENT TRAPS/BASINS

Sediment traps and basins are constructed water catchments, which allow soils to settle out of storm water runoff. Sediment traps and basins need to be used in conjunction with other BMP's. Sediment traps are to be used on sites less than five acres and sediment basins are to be used on site five acres or larger.

## REGULATIONS

The Knox County Grading permit procedure is established to reduce both erosion and sediment problems resulting from the development process and the increase of urban runoff from developed land. Article 6 of the *Knox County Zoning Ordinance* outlines the procedure for administering and enforcing a Grading Permit.

An application for a Grading Permit shall be submitted to the **Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works** prior to the beginning of any grading, clearing, excavating, filling or other disturbance of natural terrain.

All grading activities in Knox County must follow these basic guidelines:

- Practice erosion control best management practices as outlined in this handout and or directed by Knox County. The Knox County Policy for Control of Erosion and Storm water and the Tennessee Erosion Control Handbook are good guides to proper implementation of these techniques.
- Drainage ways shall not be altered or obstructed in such a way as to create flooding or sediment problems outside the project area.
- Fill material must be at least 90% soil. No demolition material, household waste or other degradable material may be used. Yard waste may not be transported from another site. If on-site yard waste (brush, tree stumps, etc.) is to be used, it must comprise no more than 10% of the fill materials used.
- All plans and permits required by Knox County and other agencies must be in place.

A Knox County Grading Permit does not imply compliance with any other regulations. For questions regarding wet weather springs, creeks, rivers, sinkholes, wetlands, or other considerations please contact Knox County Engineering and Public Works or the agencies listed under contact information in this handout.

## **ENFORCEMENT**

Any person, firm, association, or corporation who violates, disobeys, omits, neglects, or refuses to comply with or resists the enforcement of any of the provisions of Knox County Zoning Ordinances may be cited to General Sessions Court. Knox County Engineering and Public Works as well as Codes Administration personnel may issue citations to General Sessions Court for erosion and sediment control violations. A violation of the ordinance may be punished by assessment of a civil penalty of not less than \$100 or more than \$1000 per citation.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

<i>Knox County Engineering &amp; Public Works</i>	(865) 215-5800
<i>Metropolitan Planning Commission</i>	(865) 215-2500
<i>Army Corps of Engineers</i>	(865) 986-7296
<i>Tennessee Department of Environment &amp; Conservation (TDEC)</i>	
<i>Surface Water</i>	(865) 594-6035
<i>Groundwater</i>	(615) 532-9224
<i>Natural Resource Conservation Service</i>	(865) 523-3338 X-3