



# Clark County Stormwater Code Comparison

## What are the big changes to the Clark County Stormwater Code?

Now	Proposed	Differences
<b>Stormwater Flow Control Facilities</b>		
In most situations, methods used to size facilities do not represent actual conditions, resulting in less flow control protection for streams and creeks.	Hydrologic models using 50 years of rainfall data better represent real conditions, resulting in more protective facilities.	Stormwater ponds typically would be much larger.
<b>Low Impact Development (LID)</b>		
LID best management practices (BMPs) are considered experimental and subject to extra review and conditions of approval.	LID BMPs like rain gardens and pervious pavement will be allowed where appropriate.	LID could achieve flow control and water quality at a much lower cost on many sites.  Not all sites would be able to achieve the same level of benefit from LID stormwater approaches.
<b>Enhanced Water Quality Treatment</b>		
Different levels of water quality treatment are required depending on land use, soil properties, and proximity to drinking wells.	High use roadways and some commercial/industrial sites are required to meet enhanced treatment requirements to remove more metals from stormwater.	Specific BMPs would be required on high use sites to meet enhanced treatment requirements.
<b>Erosion Control</b>		
Land-disturbing activities involving grading 50 cubic yards (CY) or more or creating 2,000 square feet (SF) of impervious surface in the urban area or 5,000 SF in the rural area must prepare an erosion control plan that is reviewed and approved by the county.  If the project is bigger than 1 acre, a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) is also required to meet state permit requirements, but it is not reviewed by the county.	Projects that will grade more than 50 CY, create less than 2,000 SF of hard surface, or less than 7,000 SF of disturbed area must still prepare an erosion control plan.  Land-disturbing activities that involve more than 2,000 SF of hard surface or 7,000 SF of total disturbed area will require an SWPPP that the county will review and approve prior to construction.  The same SWPPP can meet the state permit requirements as well.	Requirements for projects that fall between 50 CY of grading and the new area limits would be unchanged for the most part.  Projects that fall between the new area limits and 1 acre would require an SWPPP.  The county would review and approve all SWPPPs.
<b>Applicability</b>		
The stormwater and erosion control ordinance applies to projects that disturb land cover or create hard surfaces.  In general, projects that add over 2,000 SF of impervious area in the urban area or 5,000 SF in the rural area trigger stormwater and erosion control.  However, there are other triggers and different thresholds for land disturbing activities like clearing, grading, redevelopment, or infill projects.	In general, the ordinance will still apply to projects that disturb land cover or create hard surfaces.  In addition to hard surfaces, creating large areas of landscaping where forest or other native vegetation exist will require stormwater management.  Threshold areas will be the same for urban and rural projects.	The ordinance would still apply to projects based on the area of land disturbed or hard surfaces created.  Large areas of new landscaping may require stormwater management as well.
<b>Rural Lands</b>		
Agricultural practices and existing rural single-family uses are exempt from stormwater ordinance.	While agricultural practices will remain exempt, creating hard surfaces in the rural area will not always be exempt, depending on the area created and the location of the proposed work.	Formerly exempt activities would have to meet certain requirements.  New BMPs would be available to help meet new requirements.  County is working on a simple review process for rural projects.
<b>Clark County Stormwater Manual</b>		
County currently references the 1992 Puget Sound Manual and does not have a manual for county standards.	County is creating a manual with county-specific information that amends Ecology's 2005 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington.	New county manual would be available to guide technical stormwater requirements specific to Clark County.  Code would be easier to read and follow because technical detail would be in the manual.
<b>Fencing of Stormwater Facilities</b>		
Almost all public facilities must be fenced with chain link.	Fencing guidelines will follow Ecology's manual with requirements, depending on how steep the slopes are into the pond, wall height, or if walls exist in the pond.  When fencing is required, fence types will vary from 6-foot chain link to split rail, depending on the depth of the pond and area needing to be fenced.	Better-defined criteria would allow construction of more visually attractive facilities that would appear less prison-like.
<b>Right-of-Way</b>		
Stormwater facilities are not allowed in the public road right-of-way.	Underground stormwater facilities will be allowed where the potential for future conflicts with other utilities is limited.	Separate tracts or easements would no longer be required for all stormwater facilities.
<b>Wetland Protection</b>		
Requirements to protect wetlands from increases in the volume of stormwater runoff are not included.	Verification will be required that stormwater will not adversely affect wetlands.	If development intends to discharge stormwater runoff to wetland, owner must demonstrate that current wetland habitat and hydrology would not be harmed.

For more information, contact the Clean Water Program at (360) 397-6118, extension 4345.