

praying for rain

DENZEL WASHINGTON

“You pray for rain, you gotta deal with the mud too. That’s a part of it.”
--- Denzel Washington
The Equalizer (2014)

After an intense drought year in California, along with all that comes with it, wildfires, smoke, dust ... it may be hard to think again about rain. Many have been praying that the wet stuff would again come back to sunny California. In this month’s edition of *The Monthly Dirt*, we are going to focus on preparing for rain at construction sites and dealing with the mud too!

Caltrans calls them winterization plans and requires them to be submitted by September 1 of each year, but even though it’s now October, it’s not too late for construction projects to start preparing for the upcoming storm season. Just as the farmer gets his fields ready for rain, QSPs need to be getting their projects ready as well. Here is where you should spend some time getting ready for the fall and winter rains:

Where Water Leaves the Site: Look at all of the locations where water leaves your project. These can take various forms, but usually they include: drain inlets, storm water conveyances, and project perimeters.



Drain inlets need to be inspected for a build up of sediment accumulated from wind and dry season construction activities. If a geotextile or plastic barrier was installed under the grate, remove it and replace it with a drain inlet bag insert. Refresh gravel bags (or compost socks)

by “fluffing them up” to remove a build up of sediment, sweep up around the drain inlet, and reposition the gravel bags to stop sediment before entering the inlet. Evaluate the condition of the gravel bags and replace them if there are signs of wear and tear or the fabric appears to be brittle or weak.



Storm water swales and aboveground conveyances need to be stabilized so that concentrated flows do not cause erosion.

Project perimeters where water may flow off site need to have sediment controls correctly installed. Check to see if the installed fiber roll, silt fence, or compost sock needs to be repaired or replaced. Small gaps under or at adjoining sections of the perimeter control can cause big problems with turbidity. Remove accumulated sediment and make sure that the control measure has the full amount of designed sediment capturing capacity.



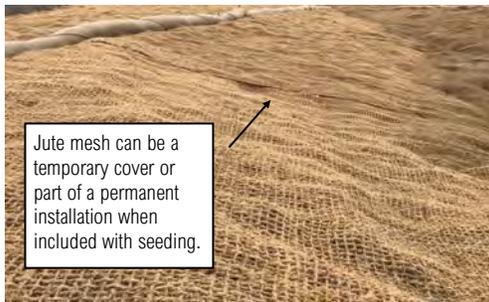
Where Water Contacts Disturbed Soil:

Don’t wait until the first rains to take action. Now’s the time to cover up disturbed soil areas (DSAs).

An abundance of silt fence, fiber roll, and compost socks won’t stop erosion, you must have what the Construction General Permit requires for all risk levels ... *an effective soil cover*. Only a cover will stop the first form of



erosion (*raindrop*) from occurring. The permit doesn't specify what cover, it just says it needs to be effective. An effective cover can range from very temporary plastic sheeting to permanent landscaping. Temporary options include erosion control mats, geotextile, straw mulch (hand or machine applied), hydraulic mulch, and hydroseed. Permanent options include wood mulch, pine duff, sod, crushed rock, and paving.



Jute mesh can be a temporary cover or part of a permanent installation when included with seeding.

Where Water Contacts Pollutants:

A big part of getting ready for rain is to do, not spring cleaning, but fall cleaning or good housekeeping. Rain runoff will mobilize solid waste, concrete waste, oils and fuels, stockpiled materials, and other erodible or dissolvable materials. So, now is the time for the big cover-up. Cover or put under cover the following items:

- Waste bins
- Concrete wash outs
- Liquid materials such as oil, fuel cans, 55-gallon drums and totes, DEF fluid, lubricants, primers and glues, paint, solvents, etc.
- Bags of concrete, mortar, grout, sand, and fertilizers.
- Landscaping materials and amendments
- Stockpiles
- Oily equipment

Portable sanitary facilities should also be inspected to assure that they are not going to be pollutant sources. Make sure that they are positioned in a place that is at least 50 feet from a storm drain inlet and not within a storm water conveyance (such as in the curb and gutter of a roadway). Port-a-potties should be secured so



If you were preparing a pre-storm inspection report and REAP, you would want to mention this activity needing to be covered and cleaned up.

that high winds during storm events don't knock them over. Make sure that they are fitted with a containment tray and that it has ample capacity to capture a spill.



It would be a good idea to secure these before the stormy season with t-bar posts and rope.

Where the Rubber Meets the Road:

As Mr. Equalizer himself said, "You gotta deal with the mud too. That's a part of it." I don't know if Denzel was thinking of track out controls when he said that in *Equalizer 4*, but this is one more area that needs to be prepared for fall and winter rains. While it is still dry, it is a good time to do some maintenance on existing track out controls or install them at uncontrolled exits.



Check for areas of exposed dirt, deposited sediment, and track out.

Make sure track out controls do not drain towards the street, otherwise your track out device will become a discharge point and not a pretty one at that! This is a good time to do some maintenance. You can wash out accumulated sediment to a sediment trap or replace or add to the rock layer. Where there has been a lot of sediment build up, it might be best to start over with a new layer of geotextile and reconstruct it to the TC-1 standard. (For more information, check out the [August 2021 Monthly Dirt](#).)

Many are praying for rain this year—another drought year would certainly be disastrous for California. Trusting that those prayers will be answered, construction projects should now prepare for rain ... it's coming!

--- MD

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Live Online Events:

Oct. 26-28, 2021: Online QSP/QSD Class
Register at <https://secure.wgr-sw.com/training/livecourses/>

New to Caltrans?

Last month, Storm Water Awareness Week, featured a couple of workshops that are ideal for storm water professionals and contractors who are new to Caltrans projects and the Caltrans storm water management program. If that describes you, check out these workshops that are still available on the Storm Water Awareness Week website.



Storm Water - Caltrans Style!

Dusty Giffin, Storm Water Coordinator for Caltrans District 3, and David Korfas, Construction Storm Water Coordinator with TRC, talk about how Caltrans complies with the California Construction General Permit. They cover some of the Caltrans-unique program elements such as CEM forms, CCEP and Photo Log inspections, Water Pollution Control Manager requirements, and Winterization Plans.



New 8-hour Caltrans Water Pollution Control Manager Training Requirements

Bob Shults with Verux, discusses the new Caltrans Water Pollution Control Manager (WPCM) 8-hour training requirement. He provides the history and timeline of the training and an overview of the training topics and emphasis for WPCM's moving forward.

Please contact us if you have any questions ...

The Monthly Dirt

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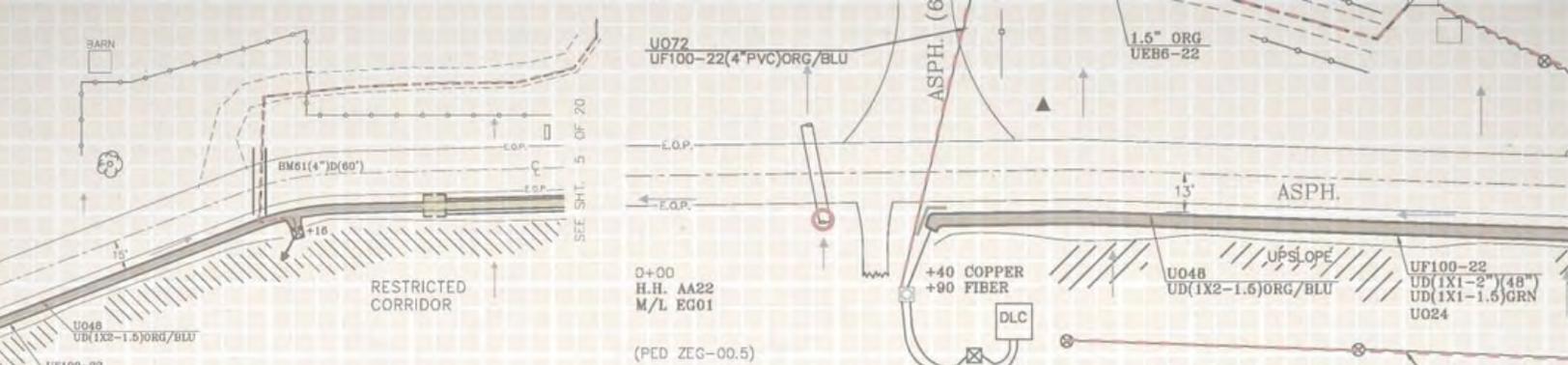
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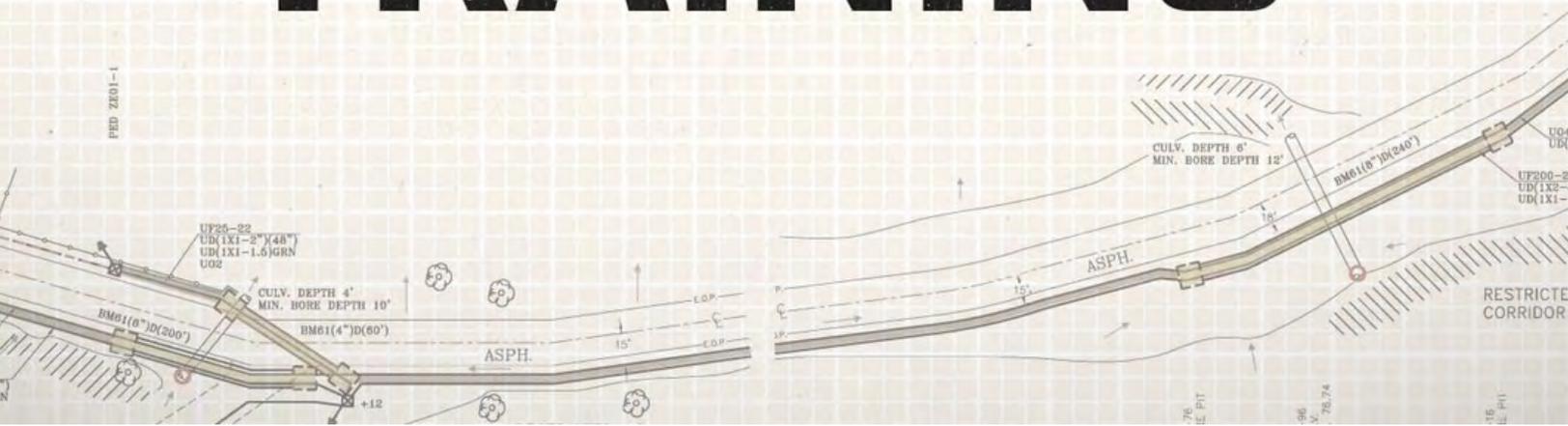
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ONLINE QSP/QSD TRAINING



**JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT ONLINE COURSE
OCTOBER 26-28, 2021**

**QSP TRAINING (2-DAY): \$375 | QSP/QSD TRAINING (3-DAY): \$550
QSD-ONLY (1-DAY): \$250**

The first 12 people to register will receive a \$25 gift card to Chipotle to enjoy during the course.

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