



Surface Sand Filters and Infiltration Trenches

NON-STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE

What is a sand filter?

A sand filter is a type of stormwater management facility designed to filter rainwater. It is typically a depression in the ground filled with sand that helps to manage polluted or excess rainwater. To the untrained eye, it may look like a sand box or volleyball court.

What is an infiltration trench?

An infiltration trench is a type of stormwater management facility designed to filter rainwater. Infiltration trenches are excavated channels filled with gravel that help to manage polluted or excess rainwater on your property. They can be designed to be located on the ground surface or buried.

How do they work?

During a storm, rainwater collects pollutants as it flows across hard surfaces, such as rooftops, sidewalks, and roads. These facilities capture the rainwater, direct it through layers of sand and/or gravel that filter out pollutants, and return the clean water back to the local stream or into the storm drain system. You can find them in residential neighborhoods and around commercial businesses.

Why are these facilities important?

- Remove pollutants
- Improve health of streams and rivers
- Help to make our waters fishable and swimmable
- Improve the quality of the Chesapeake Bay

Why is it important to keep your facility maintained?

Not only is it a County requirement to maintain your facility, but an unmaintained sand filter may:

- Not remove pollutants as intended, sending polluted water to streams and rivers
- Become an eyesore for your community
- Over time, allow unwanted vegetation to grow over it, reducing its effectiveness
- Allow water to pool long enough for insects to breed (longer than 3 days)
- Cost more to fix if problems are left unchecked



Sand Filter

As rainwater flows over hard surfaces and lawns it picks up pollutants such as sediment, trash, pesticides from lawns, nutrients from fertilizer or pet waste, and oil and grease from cars. Sand filters and infiltration trenches can help to reduce this pollution.



Infiltration Trench

Who is responsible for this non-structural maintenance?

As the property owner, YOU are responsible for:

Grass Cutting Trash Removal Vegetation Management

Please visit the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website for a list of approved contractors. DEP-approved contractors are recommended but not required for non-structural maintenance.

To learn about your **structural** maintenance responsibilities, please see our Structural Maintenance Fact Sheets.

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/stormwater

Maintenance 101 What and How

Regular maintenance will help prevent long-term damage and avoid potential violations. These basic actions will keep your facility looking good and working correctly, which will save you money in the long term.

How will I know what maintenance is required?

Montgomery County regulations require that you perform ongoing routine grass cutting, trash removal, and vegetation management of your stormwater facility. If the work described below is not done regularly, you could receive a notice of violation.

Grass Cutting

Mow grass in the surrounding area **at least twice a year**

- Around sand filter or infiltration trench
- Prevent cut grass from blowing into the filter or trench

Vegetation Management

At least twice a year

- Remove all trees and woody vegetation from the sand filter or infiltration trench
- Remove all grass and weeds growing in the facility
- Prevent trees and woody vegetation from growing in the facility
- Rake the sand in the sand filter
- Seed and cover adjacent areas of bare soil to prevent erosion

**Do not apply herbicides or pesticides within the facility.
Vegetation removal should be performed manually.**

Trash Removal

Remove trash and debris from all areas in and around the trench or filter **monthly**

Other Preventive Maintenance

As needed

- Know the pollutant sources on your property and try to reduce or eliminate the pollutants at the source
- Notify DEP if beaver activity or animal burrowing is observed
- Keep children from playing in the sand or stones
- Inform contractors working on your property of the location of the sand filter to prevent accidental damage and the placement of snow over the sand filter or infiltration trench
- Inspect the facility after every major storm and contact DEP if you are concerned

What if I need help or have additional questions?

DEP can answer your questions and provide additional guidance about maintaining your facility. Please e-mail us at Askdep@montgomerycountymd.gov, call the Montgomery County Customer Service Center at 3-1-1, or visit our website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/stormwater>.

Grass Cutting

Keep surrounding area mowed **at least twice a year**



Vegetation Management

Remove trees and brush in the facility **at least twice a year**



Trash Removal

Clear trash **monthly**



Other Maintenance

Inspect and perform **as needed**

