

The startup meeting

The project startup meeting is a fundamental element of the management plan. It is the site manager's responsibility to organize the startup meeting. The meeting should be attended by the site designer, erosion and sediment control plan designer, and local enforcement personnel, as well as supervision and staff from the project. It may be appropriate to have others attend such as municipal representatives or environmental regulators.

The agenda for the startup meeting should include introductions of the attendees (a sign-in sheet is recommended to collect phone numbers), review of the scope of the project, and consideration of what is to be done in the course of developing the site. A site plan should be used to act as a discussion guide. If phases are involved, the delineation and field recognition of phase lines should be discussed. The construction sequence should also be reviewed. The review of the grading operations should include specifically the identifications of areas of significant cuts and fills and sensitive areas such as wetlands or floodplains. The erosion and sediment controls that will be used throughout the project should be reviewed, and maintenance schedules and repair plans should be specified. Contact people for emergency response should be identified. A site walkover should be conducted to familiarize everyone with the startup condition of the site and areas of concern. This is particularly important if there is existing erosion or sedimentation occurring. Minutes should be taken during the meeting and distributed afterward to all the attendees. A copy of these minutes should be kept in the project log.

Once the earthwork has begun and the project is up and running, the site manager will be diverted from the erosion and sediment control plan. A schedule of routine maintenance, developed prior to the startup, is a helpful prompt for the manager to keep the commitment to the plan. By assigning a staff person to follow up on the schedule, the manager can be sure the routine inspections and maintenance items are being addressed.

Routine inspections are scheduled at frequencies that reflect the site characteristics, the time of the year, and the condition of the site. A hilly site that is fully disturbed during the rainy part of the year will justify more frequent inspection than the same site partially stabilized during a dry season. Inspections themselves are relatively inexpensive, requiring only a visual check in most cases to ascertain the condition and any corrective action that might be required. The use of a small tape recorder makes note taking almost effortless.

It is unreasonable to assume that the schedule set out in the beginning of a project will be met perfectly throughout the project. Some flexibility is appropriate in the system. In most cases, slipping the schedule 2 or 3 days is not a problem. Since inspections should be made after every significant rain or melt event without exception, the routine inspection schedule can be adjusted to reflect these events.

From the startup meeting and throughout the project until final stabilization is confirmed, a logbook should be maintained by the person assigned the