

Updated Storm Water Quality Design Manual

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For the Commercial Development industry, it may be time to re-evaluate the development process and address Stormwater Quality Management concerns much earlier in your timeline.

Various municipalities in Sacramento and South Placer counties are collaborating on a new Stormwater Quality Design Manual (SQDM) which outlines the “planning tools and requirements necessary to help ensure that new and redevelopment projects reduce urban runoff pollution to the maximum extent practicable (MEP) to protect the quality of our local creeks and rivers.”ⁱ

The municipalities currently involved include the County of Sacramento and the Cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Rancho Cordova, Roseville, and Sacramento. While all the participants are committed to adopting the manual, two main players have actual timeframes. Roseville plans to adopt the standard by Summer 2007; Sacramento will be publishing their final design manual by May 2007. The group also expects that other regional municipalities will adopt the manual after it is complete.

As a professional consultant, TLA Engineering & Planning has been advising their Clients of ways to comply with the new standards, based upon the SQDM. This means considering stormwater best management practices during site planning, rather than during the design phase. The manual is set up into three major chapters re:

- Source control – “prevent pollutants from contacting site runoff”ⁱⁱ
- Runoff reduction – “mimic a site’s predevelopment balance of runoff and infiltration by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate and detain runoff close to its source”ⁱⁱⁱ
- Treatment – “engineered technologies design to remove pollutants from site runoff”^{iv}

What does this mean? Many of your proprietary stormwater treatment devices may not be allowed by local jurisdictions; devices like: Jensen Precast Stormwater Interceptor®, Vortechs®, and Stormceptor®.

Many of the recommended treatment measures contained in the SQDM cannot accommodate the traditional grading and drainage designs utilizing inlets and underground storm drains commonly used for commercial sites. When developing your site plan, retention and detention through open areas, vegetation or landscaped areas are likely to be some of the choice methods for complying. This will require re-thinking how to lay out buildings and parking lots. Planters, landscape buffers, and open spaces will function as your project’s water quality devices.

The new manual is due to be available on February 16, 2007 (at the time of this writing). In addition, SQDM workshops will be held in March to allow the public to comment on the draft manual. For additional information, read www.sacramentostormwater.org/SSQP/SSQP.asp or contact your engineering consultant.

TLA Engineering & Planning, Inc. is a land planning and civil engineering firm dedicated to providing a full-range of services to private and public clients. Established in 1985, the firm specializes in planning, permitting, design and managing public and private projects that range from small to large, simple to complex. Experience earned over many years and across all varieties of projects provides the necessary foundation for a wide range of capabilities. Each project is undertaken with an eye toward providing solutions that allow plans and project to proceed smoothly. Contact Valerie Hoff at. (916) 786-0685 or vhoff@tlowell.com.

ⁱ Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento and South Placer Regions. December 2006 Development Focus Group Review Draft. Page 1-1.

ⁱⁱ Ibid. Page 4-1.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid. Page 5-1.

^{iv} Ibid. Page 6-1.