Construction Specifications for Sand Filters, Bioretention and Open Channels

Appendix B.3

B.3.A Sand Filter Specifications

1. Material Specifications for Sand Filters

The allowable materials for sand filter construction are detailed in Table B.3.1.

2. Sand Filter Testing Specifications

Underground sand filters, facilities within sensitive groundwater aquifers, and filters designed to serve urban hot spots are to be tested for water tightness prior to placement of filter media. Entrances and exits should be plugged and the system completely filled with water to demonstrate water tightness. Water tightness means no leakage for a period of 8 hours.

All overflow weirs, multiple orifices and flow distribution slots are to be field-tested to verify adequate distribution of flows.

3. Sand Filter Construction Specifications

Provide sufficient maintenance access (i.e., 12-foot-wide road with legally recorded easement). Vegetated access slopes are to be a maximum of 10%; gravel slopes to 15%; paved slopes to 25%.

Absolutely no runoff is to enter the filter until all contributing drainage areas have been stabilized.

Surface of filter bed is to be level.

All underground sand filters should be clearly delineated with signs so that they may be located when maintenance is due.

Surface sand filters may be planted with appropriate grasses; see Appendix A.

"Pocket" sand filters (and residential bioretention facilities treating areas larger than an acre) shall be sized with a stone "window" that covers approximately 10% of the filter area. This "window" shall be filled pea gravel (3/4 inch stone).

4. Specifications Pertaining to Underground Sand Filters (F-2)

Provide manhole and/or grates to all underground and below grade structures. Manholes shall be in compliance with standard specifications for each county but diameters should be 30" minimum (to comply with OSHA confined space requirements). Aluminum and steel louvered doors are also acceptable. Ten inch wide (minimum) manhole steps (12" o.c.) shall be cast in place or drilled and mortared into the wall below each manhole. A 5' minimum height clearance (from the top of the sand layer to the bottom of the upper/surface slab) is required for all permanent underground structures. Lift rings are to be supplied to remove/replace top slabs on pre-fabricated structures. Manhole covers should allow for proper ventilation.

Underground sand filters should be constructed with a gate valve located just above the top of the filter bed for dewatering in the event that clogging occurs.

Underground sand beds shall be protected from trash accumulation by a wide mesh geotextile screen to be placed on the surface of the sand bed; screen is to be rolled up, removed, cleaned and re-installed during maintenance operations.

Table B.3.1 Material Specifications for Sand Filters

Material	Specification/Test Method	Size	Notes
sand	clean AASHTO-M-6 or ASTM-C-33 concrete sand	0.02" to 0.04"	Sand substitutions such as Diabase and Graystone #10 are not acceptable. No calcium carbonated or dolomitic sand substitutions are acceptable. No "rock dust" can be used for sand.
peat	ash content: < 15% pH range: 5.2 to 4.9 loose bulk density 0.12 to 0.15 g/cc	n/a	The material must be reed-sedge hemic peat, shredded, uncompacted, uniform, and clean.
leaf compost		n/a	
underdrain gravel	AASHTO-M-43	0.375" to 0.75"	
geotextile fabric (if required)	ASTM-D-4833 (puncture strength - 125 lb.) ASTM-D-4632 (Tensile Strength - 300 lb.)	**0.08"** thick equivalent opening size of #80 sieve	Must maintain 125 gpm per sq. ft. flow rate. Note: a 4" pea gravel layer may be substituted for geotextiles meant to "separate" sand filter layers.
impermeable liner (if required)	ASTM-D-4833 (thickness) ASTM-D-412 (tensile strength 1,100 lb., elongation 200%) ASTM-D-624 (Tear resistance - 150 lb./in) ASTM-D-471 (water adsorption: +8 to -2% mass)	30 mil thickness	Liner to be ultraviolet resistant. A geotextile fabric should be used to protect the liner from puncture.
underdrain piping	F 758, Type PS 28 or AASHTO-M-278	4" - 6" rigid schedule 40 PVC or SDR35	3/8" perf. @ 6" on center, 4 holes per row; minimum of 3" of gravel over pipes; not necessary underneath pipes
concrete (cast-in-place)	MSHA Standards and Specs. Section 902, Mix No. 3, f'_c = 3500 psi, normal weight, air-entrained; re-inforcing to meet ASTM-615-60	n/a	on-site testing of poured-in-place concrete required: 28 day strength and slump test; all concrete design (cast-in-place or pre-cast) *not using previously approved State or local standards* requires design drawings sealed and approved by a professional structural engineer licensed in the State of Maryland
concrete (pre-cast)	per pre-cast manufacturer	n/a	SEE ABOVE NOTE
non-rebar steel	ASTM A-36	n/a	structural steel to be hot-dipped galvanized ASTM-A-123

B.3.B Specifications for Bioretention

1. Material Specifications

The allowable materials to be used in bioretention area are detailed in Table B.3.2.

2. Planting Soil

The soil shall be a uniform mix, free of stones, stumps, roots or other similar objects larger than two inches. No other materials or substances shall be mixed or dumped within the bioretention area that may be harmful to plant growth, or prove a hindrance to the planting or maintenance operations. The planting soil shall be free of Bermuda grass, Quackgrass, Johnson grass, or other noxious weeds as specified under COMAR 15.08.01.05.

The planting soil shall be tested and shall meet the following criteria:

pH range	5.2 - 7.0
organic matter	1.5 - 4% (by weight)
magnesium	35 lb./ac
phosphorus (phosphate - P_2O_5)	75 lb./ac
potassium (potash - K_2O)	85 lb./ac
soluble salts	not to exceed 500 ppm

All bioretention areas shall have a minimum of one test. Each test shall consist of both the standard soil test for pH, phosphorus, and potassium and additional tests of organic matter, and soluble salts. A textural analysis is required from the site stockpiled topsoil. If topsoil is imported, then a texture analysis shall be performed for each location where the top soil was excavated.

Since different labs calibrate their testing equipment differently, all testing results shall come from the same testing facility.

Should the pH fall out of the acceptable range, it may be modified (higher) with lime or (lower) with iron sulfate plus sulfur.

3. Compaction

It is very important to minimize compaction of both the base of the bioretention area and the required backfill. When possible, use excavation hoes to remove original soil. If bioretention

areas are excavated using a loader, the contractor should use wide track or marsh track equipment, or light equipment with turf type tires. Use of equipment with narrow tracks or narrow tires, rubber tires with large lugs, or high pressure tires will cause excessive compaction resulting in reduced infiltration rates and is not acceptable. Compaction will significantly contribute to design failure.

Compaction can be alleviated at the base of the bioretention facility by using a primary tilling operation such as a chisel plow, ripper, or subsoiler. These tilling operations are to refracture the soil profile through the 12 inch compaction zone. Substitute methods must be approved by the engineer. Rototillers typically do not till deep enough to reduce the effects of compaction from heavy equipment.

Rototill 2 to 3 inches of sand into the base of the bioretention facility before backfilling the optional sand layer. Pump any ponded water before preparing (rototilling) base.

When backfilling the topsoil over the sand layer, first place 3 to 4 inches of topsoil over the sand, then rototill the sand/topsoil to create a gradation zone. Backfill the remainder of the topsoil to final grade.

When backfilling the bioretention facility, place soil in lifts 12" to 18". Do not use heavy equipment within the bioretention basin. Heavy equipment can be used around the perimeter of the basin to supply soils and sand. Grade bioretention materials with light equipment such as a compact loader or a dozer/loader with marsh tracks.

4. Plant Material

Recommended plant material for bioretention areas can be found in Appendix A, Section A.2.3.

5. Plant Installation

Mulch should be placed to a uniform thickness of 2" to 3". Shredded hardwood mulch is the only accepted mulch. Pine mulch and wood chips will float and move to the perimeter of the bioretention area during a storm event and are not acceptable. Shredded mulch must be well aged (6 to 12 months) for acceptance.

Root stock of the plant material shall be kept moist during transport and on-site storage. The plant root ball should be planted so $1/8^{th}$ of the ball is above final grade surface. The diameter of the planting pit shall be at least six inches larger than the diameter of the planting ball. Set and maintain the plant straight during the entire planting process. Thoroughly water ground bed cover after installation.

Trees shall be braced using 2" by 2" stakes only as necessary and for the first growing season only. Stakes are to be equally spaced on the outside of the tree ball.

Grasses and legume seed should be drilled into the soil to a depth of at least one inch. Grass and legume plugs shall be planted following the non-grass ground cover planting specifications.

The topsoil specifications provide enough organic material to adequately supply nutrients from natural cycling. The primary function of the bioretention structure is to improve water quality. Adding fertilizers defeats, or at a minimum, impedes this goal. Only add fertilizer if wood chips or mulch are used to amend the soil. Rototill urea fertilizer at a rate of 2 pounds per 1000 square feet.

6. Underdrains

Underdrains are to be placed on a 3'-0" wide section of filter cloth. Pipe is placed next, followed by the gravel bedding. The ends of underdrain pipes not terminating in an observation well shall be capped.

The main collector pipe for underdrain systems shall be constructed at a minimum slope of 0.5%. Observation wells and/or clean-out pipes must be provided (one minimum per every 1000 square feet of surface area).

7. Miscellaneous

The bioretention facility may not be constructed until all contributing drainage area has been stabilized.

Table B.3.2 Materials Specifications for Bioretention

Material	Specification	Size	Notes
Plantings	see Appendix A, Table A.4	n/a	plantings are site-specific
planting soil [2.5' to 4' deep]	sand 35 - 60% silt 30 - 55% clay 10 - 25%	n/a	USDA soil types loamy sand, sandy loam or loam
mulch	shredded hardwood		aged 6 months, minimum
pea gravel diaphragm and curtain drain	pea gravel: ASTM-D-448 ornamental stone: washed cobbles	pea gravel: No. 6 stone: 2" to 5"	
geotextile	Class "C" - apparent opening size (ASTM-D-4751), grab tensile strength (ASTM-D-4632), puncture resistance (ASTM-D-4833)	n/a	for use as necessary beneath underdrains only
underdrain gravel	AASHTO M-43	0.375" to 0.75"	
underdrain piping	F 758, Type PS 28 or AASHTO M-278	4" to 6" rigid schedule 40 PVC or SDR35	3/8" perf. @ 6" on center, 4 holes per row; minimum of 3" of gravel over pipes; not necessary underneath pipes
poured in place concrete (if required)	MSHA Mix No. 3; f'_c = 3500 psi @ 28 days, normal weight, air-entrained; reinforcing to meet ASTM-615-60	n/a	on-site testing of poured-in-place concrete required: 28 day strength and slump test; all concrete design (cast-in-place or pre-cast) *not using previously approved State or local standards* requires design drawings sealed and approved by a professional structural engineer licensed in the State of Maryland - design to include meeting ACI Code 350.R/89; vertical loading [H-10 or H-20]; allowable horizontal loading (based on soil pressures); and analysis of potential cracking
sand [1' deep]	AASHTO-M-6 or ASTM-C-33	0.02" to 0.04"	Sand substitutions such as Diabase and Graystone #10 are not acceptable. No calcium carbonated or dolomitic sand substitutions are acceptable. No "rock dust" can be used for sand.

B.3.C Specifications for Open Channels and Filter Strips

1. Material Specifications

The recommended construction materials for open channels and filter strips are detailed in Table B.3.3.

2. Dry Swales

Permeable soil mixture (20" to 30" deep) should meet the bioretention "planting" soil specifications.

Check dams, if required, shall be placed as specified.

System to have 6" of freeboard, minimum above 2 year water surface elevation.

Side slopes to be 3:1 maximum; (4:1 or flatter is preferred).

No gravel or perforated pipe is to be placed under driveways.

Bottom of facility to be above the seasonally high water table per Table 2 of Appendix D.1.

Seed with flood/drought resistant grasses; see Appendix A, Section 2.4.

Longitudinal slope to be 4%, maximum.

Bottom width to be 8' maximum to avoid braiding; larger widths may be used if proper berming is supplied. Width to be 2' minimum.

3. Wet Swales

Follow above information for dry swales, with the following exceptions: the seasonally high water table may inundate the swale; but not above the design bottom of the channel [NOTE: if the water table is stable within the channel, the WQ_v storage may start at this point – see Figure 3.19]

Excavate into undisturbed soils; do not use an underdrain system.

4. Filter Strips

Construct pea gravel diaphragms 12” wide, minimum, and 24” deep minimum.

Pervious berms to be a sand/gravel mix [sand (35-60%), silt (30-55%), and gravel (10-25%)]. Berms to have overflow weirs with 6 inch minimum head.

Slope range to be 2% minimum to 6% maximum.

5. Plant Selection

Recommended grass species for use in establishing permanent ground cover are provided in Section 2.4 of Appendix A.

Table B.3.3 Open Channel Systems and Filter Strip Materials Specifications

Material	Specification	Size	Notes
dry swale soil	USCS; ML, SM, SC	n/a	soil with a higher percent organic content is preferred
dry swale sand	ASTM C-33 fine aggregate concrete sand	0.02” to 0.04”	
check dam (pressure treated)	AWPA Standard C6	6” by 6” or 8” by 8”	do not coat with creosote; embed at least 3’ into side slopes
check dam (natural wood)	Black Locust, Red Mulberry, Cedars, Catalpa, White Oak, Chestnut Oak, Black Walnut	6” to 12” diameter; notch as necessary	do not use the following, as these species have a predisposition towards rot: Ash, Beech, Birch, Elm, Hackberry, hemlock, Hickories, Maples, Red and Black Oak, Pines, Poplar, Spruce, Sweetgum, Willow
filter strip sand/gravel pervious berm	sand: per dry swale sand gravel; AASHTO M-43	sand: 0.02” to 0.04” gravel: ½” to 1”	mix with approximately 25% loam soil to support grass cover crop; sand (35-60%), silt (30-55%), and gravel (10-25%) see Bioretention planting soil notes for more detail.
pea gravel diaphragm and curtain drain	ASTM D 448	varies (No. 6) or (1/8” to 3/8”)	use clean bank-run gravel
underdrain gravel	AASHTO M-43	0.25” to 0.75”	
underdrain	F 758 Type PS 28 or AASHTO M-278	4” to 6” rigid schedule 40 PVC or SDR35	3/8” perf. @ 6” on center, 4 holes per row; minimum of 3” of gravel over pipes; not necessary underneath pipes
geotextile	Class “C” - apparent opening size (ASTM-D-4751), grab tensile strength (ASTM-D-4632), puncture resistance (ASTM-D-4833)	n/a	
rip rap	per county criteria; if none given, use MSHA Standards and Specs Section 905	size per county DOT requirements based on 10-year design flows	