



OCTA

Office of Customer &
Technical Assistance

Fact Sheet

Pollution Prevention Program

RHODE ISLAND CONSTRUCTION SITE STORMWATER COMPLIANCE SELF-CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***What types of construction activities are covered by the self-certification program?*** Any site undergoing construction activities which will disturb ≥ 1 acre of land. This includes any projects which are already required to obtain authorization to discharge under, and fully comply with, the Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (“the RIPDES Construction General Permit”).
2. ***Are all construction sites that meet these criteria required to participate in the program?*** No. Participation is strictly voluntary right now, but will be made mandatory when the RIPDES Construction General Permit is reissued.
3. ***What are the benefits of participating?*** For site owners and operators who are responsible for compliance, the advantages include:
 - Being better prepared for a random or targeted regulatory compliance inspection, thereby reducing the likelihood of being subject to a formal enforcement action resulting from environmental violations.
 - Knowing exactly how their compliance will be measured when inspected by state and federal environmental agencies. This is because the Construction Site Stormwater Compliance Workbook has been designed to contain the exact same questions regulators will use when they inspect your construction project.
 - Being able to readily determine when compliance issues exist at their construction site, and so have the opportunity to take corrective action before environmental impacts and/or violations occur.
 - Receive free compliance assistance by contacting the RIDEM Office of Technical and Customer Assistance.

RI Department of Environmental Management – Office of Technical & Customer Assistance
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908
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4. ***What requirements does the self-certification program cover?*** The program will assist in achieving compliance with RIPDES Construction General Permit requirements as well as some specific RIDEM Freshwater Wetlands Permit requirements.
5. ***Are there other requirements applicable to construction sites that are not covered by the program?*** State, federal, or local requirements or permits that may apply to your project site (such as building codes, local soil and erosion control requirements, fire codes, etc.) may not be covered. You must comply with all requirements relevant to your project.
6. ***Does participation in the program exempt a site from compliance with any state, federal or local requirements?*** No. All sites must comply with all applicable regulations whether they choose to participate in the program or not.
7. ***Does participation in the program guarantee that a site will not be subject to inspection?*** No. State and federal environmental agencies still have authority to perform inspections, but sites that self-certify will be better prepared in the event of an inspection.
8. ***Are the self-certification checklists a substitute for the weekly and post-storm inspections required by the RIPDES Construction General Permit?*** No. Owners and operators will still be required to conduct Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan inspections at least once every seven (7) days, and within twenty-four (24) hours after significant rain events (>0.25 inches/day). The requirement to conduct Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan inspections is only one of many regulatory requirements that apply to your construction activity. The self-certification checklists provided in the Construction Site Stormwater Compliance Workbook are provided to assist owners and operators to fully understand and comply with all of the RIPDES Construction General Permit requirements at each key phase of the construction project (i.e. Start of Construction and Completion of Construction). Please note however, that the final self-certification checklist (i.e. DEM Submittal No. 2 – Completion of Construction) may serve as the RIPDES Construction General Permit Notice of Termination.
9. ***Where can I obtain more information about the Storm Water Construction Self-Certification Program and how do I get started?*** More detailed information about the program can be found in the Construction Site Stormwater Compliance Workbook, which is available at the following RIDEM website: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/assist/ms4/index.htm>
10. ***How can someone reach the RIDEM to discuss the program in more detail?*** Additional guidance can be obtained by contacting the RIDEM – Office of Technical and Customer Assistance at (401) 222-6822 or the RIDEM – Office of Water Resources RIPDES Permitting Program at (401) 222-4700.