

Controlling Erosion

Erosion occurs when soil particles are dislodged by the force of stormwater runoff or by wind. Some soils have a tendency to erode more than others do. Any soil type that is left bare and unprotected will erode. Also, the steeper and longer the slope of the exposed land, the faster and more erosive runoff becomes. Minimizing runoff and preventing erosion reduces the movement of other pollutants from your property to the nearest stream or storm drain.

A healthy soil is porous, multi-textured and full of life. The topsoil, the upper six to eight inches, should be high in organic content. Earthworms and soil microbes help to make nutrients available to plants and keep the soil absorbent and porous, which facilitates infiltration.

Tips for Controlling Erosion

- Protect the soil with vegetation, mulch, or other materials that will intercept the force of rainfall and runoff and help prevent erosion from taking place. Such protection will also allow maximum infiltration and minimum runoff.
- In a typical suburban yard, maintaining a healthy lawn and mulching flowerbeds and gardens will not only prevent erosion, but will also more effectively retain fertilizer and pesticides as well as other potential pollutants, such as pet waste.
- Remember, vegetation is important on steep slopes, including ditches! Allow vegetation to grow in ditches to help trap eroding soil.

Where To Get Help for runoff, erosion & soil information

- Cecil County Government Department of Public Works Sediment and Stormwater Management Branch **410-996-5267**
- Maryland Department of the Environment, Cambridge Field Office, 410-901-4020; 407 Race Street, Cambridge, MD 21613; <http://www.mde.state.md.us>
- Cecil County Soil Conservation District, 105 Chesapeake Blvd., Suite B-3, Elkton, MD 21921; <http://www.cecilscd.com>; **410-398-4411 ext. 3**
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service Soils, **410-666-1188 ext. 3**; <http://soils.usda.gov>