Efficient Irrigation

SD-12

Description

Irrigation water provided to landscaped areas may result in excess irrigation water being conveyed into stormwater drainage systems.

Approach

Project plan designs for development and redevelopment should include application methods of irrigation water that minimize runoff of excess irrigation water into the stormwater conveyance system.

Suitable Applications

Appropriate applications include residential, commercial and industrial areas planned for development or redevelopment. (Detached residential single-family homes are typically excluded from this requirement.)

Design Considerations

Designing New Installations

The following methods to reduce excessive irrigation runoff should be considered, and incorporated and implemented where determined applicable and feasible by the Permittee:

■ Employ rain-triggered shutoff devices to prevent irrigation after precipitation.

■ Design irrigation systems to each landscape area's specific water requirements.

■ Include design featuring flow reducers or shutoff valves triggered by a pressure drop to control water loss in the event of broken sprinkler heads or lines.

■ Implement landscape plans consistent with County or City water conservation resolutions, which may include provision of water sensors, programmable irrigation times (for short cycles), etc.

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- Design timing and application methods of irrigation water to minimize the runoff of excess irrigation water into the storm water drainage system.

- Group plants with similar water requirements in order to reduce excess irrigation runoff and promote surface filtration. Choose plants with low irrigation requirements (for example, native or drought tolerant species). Consider design features such as:

  - Using mulches (such as wood chips or bar) in planter areas without ground cover to minimize sediment in runoff

  - Installing appropriate plant materials for the location, in accordance with amount of sunlight and climate, and use native plant materials where possible and/or as recommended by the landscape architect

  - Leaving a vegetative barrier along the property boundary and interior watercourses, to act as a pollutant filter, where appropriate and feasible

  - Choosing plants that minimize or eliminate the use of fertilizer or pesticides to sustain growth

- Employ other comparable, equally effective methods to reduce irrigation water runoff.

Redeveloping Existing Installations

Various jurisdictional stormwater management and mitigation plans (SUSMP, WQMP, etc.) define "redevelopment" in terms of amounts of additional impervious area, increases in gross floor area and/or exterior construction, and land disturbing activities with structural or impervious surfaces. The definition of " redevelopment" must be consulted to determine whether or not the requirements for new development apply to areas intended for redevelopment. If the definition applies, the steps outlined under "designing new installations" above should be followed.

Other Resources

A Manual for the Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, May 2002.

Model Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) for San Diego County, Port of San Diego, and Cities in San Diego County, February 14, 2002.

Model Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) for County of Orange, Orange County Flood Control District, and the Incorporated Cities of Orange County, Draft February 2003.

Ventura Countywide Technical Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Control Measures, July 2002.

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