



Public Works

BOULDER COUNTY STORMWATER QUALITY PERMIT (SWQP) GUIDANCE FOR SMALL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS NEAR WATERWAYS

This guidance is for small construction projects disturbing less than one acre located near waterways. This guidance is intended to be supplemental to the **Boulder County Stormwater Quality Permit Guidance for Construction Projects near Waterways**. Working in close proximity to waterways poses a higher risk to impact water quality which is why Boulder County requires Stormwater Quality Permits (SWQP) for projects working near waterways that are less than one acre.

When is a SWQP required?

SWQP are typically required when working within 100 horizontal feet of a waterway or underneath a waterway, even when land disturbance is less than one acre. These determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis by the County's Public Works Department but will be based on the factors listed below.

- **Definition** – Waterway is defined by the watercourse definition in Boulder County Land Use Code Article 18-213A. “A channel, natural depression, slough, artificial channel, gulch, arroyo, stream, creek, pond, reservoir or lake, including major drainageways, in which stormwater runoff and floodwater flow, either regularly or infrequently.”
- **Type of waterway** - The County is generally requiring a SWQP when working within 100 horizontal feet of a permanent, perennial stream, lake, or when boring a utility or pipeline under a waterway. Waterways are typically depicted by a solid blue line on a topographic map or by a blue line on the County's Stormwater Map <https://bouldercounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=694f2d0836ef4f39ba046733da85fbd3&extent=-11727358.6504%2C4867266.5478%2C-11702898.8014%2C4878139.7151%2C102100>

SWQPs will not be required for small projects (less than an acre of disturbance) in or near irrigation laterals or ditches. Also, many agricultural ponds will be exempt from obtaining a SWQP assuming the ponds do not directly connect to a waterway. There may be other waterways that do not trigger the need for a SWQP such as an upgradient ditch that would not receive discharges from the project. Check with the County's Public Works Department, tdstormwater@bouldercounty.org for a final determination.

- **Slope** – Steeper disturbed slopes upgradient of the waterway and within the project area may influence the need for a SWQP when working near waterways. For example, if the site is more than 100 feet away from a waterway but the topography is very steep between the project area and the waterway and drains directly into the waterway, then a SWQP may be required.

- **Distance** – Typically, a SWQP will be required when working within 100 horizontal feet of a waterway as defined above.
- **Duration** – Shorter projects (less than two weeks in duration) that are less than one acre but within 100 horizontal feet may not require a SWQP, check with the Public Works Department for a determination.

When a SWQP is not required, what is needed?

Even if a SWQP is not required, using control measures is essential and mandatory. Control measures will help minimize the risk of negative impacts to water quality. All construction projects regardless of size require the use of control measures.

SWQP Submittal Requirements for Small Projects near Waterways

- Completed SWQP application,
- Completed SWQP Checklist for small projects,
- Site Maps meeting requirements listed on checklist. Additionally, the general principles outlined in the Storm Drainage Criteria Manual (SDCM, Section 1302.1) should be reviewed and considered in the design of the Site Maps, and
- Control Measure Details

MS4 Compliance Oversight for Small Projects near Waterways

The County will require an initial inspection of the control measures and final inspection by the County’s MS4 Stormwater Compliance Inspector to ensure the site has appropriate controls prior to construction and is stabilized after construction is completed.

For any additional questions, contact the Public Works Department at tdstormwater@bouldercounty.org or 303-441-3900.