

General Description

Retention/irrigation refers to the capture of stormwater runoff in a holding pond and subsequent use of the captured volume for irrigation of landscape or natural pervious areas. This technology is very effective as a stormwater quality practice in that, for the captured water quality volume, it provides virtually no discharge to receiving waters and high stormwater constituent removal efficiencies. This technology mimics natural undeveloped watershed conditions wherein the vast majority of the rainfall volume during smaller rainfall events is infiltrated through the soil profile. Their main advantage over other infiltration technologies is the use of an irrigation system to spread the runoff over a larger area for infiltration. This allows them to be used in areas with low permeability soils.

Capture of stormwater can be accomplished in almost any kind of runoff storage facility, ranging from dry, concrete-lined ponds to those with vegetated basins and permanent pools. The pump and wet well should be automated with a rainfall sensor to provide irrigation only during periods when required infiltration rates can be realized. Generally, a spray irrigation system is required to provide an adequate flow rate for distributing the water quality volume (LCRA, 1998). Collection of roof runoff for subsequent use (rainwater harvesting) also qualifies as a retention/irrigation practice.

Inspection/Maintenance Considerations

Pollutant removal rates are estimated to be nearly 100% for all pollutants in the captured and irrigated stormwater volume. However, relatively frequent inspection and maintenance is necessary to verify proper operation of these facilities.

Maintenance Concerns, Objectives, and Goals

- Sediment Accumulation
- Mechanical malfunction
- Vector Control

Targeted Constituents

✓ Sediment	■
✓ Nutrients	■
✓ Trash	■
✓ Metals	■
✓ Bacteria	■
✓ Oil and Grease	■
✓ Organics	■

Legend (Removal Effectiveness)

- Low
- High
- ▲ Medium



Inspection Activities	Suggested Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The irrigation system should be inspected and tested (or observed while in operation) to verify proper operation multiple times annually. Two of these inspections should occur during or immediately following wet weather. Any leaks, broken spray heads, or other malfunctions with the irrigation system should be repaired immediately. 	<p>Frequently (3-6 times per year)</p>
Maintenance Activities	Suggested Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The upper stage, side slopes, and embankment of a retention basin must be mowed regularly to discourage woody growth and control weeds. 	<p>Frequently</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remove sediment from inlet structure/sediment forebay, and from around the sump area at least 2 times annually or when depth reaches 3 inches. When sediment in other areas of the basin fills the volume allocated for sediment accumulation, all sediment should be removed and disposed of properly. ■ Grass areas in and around basins must be mowed at least twice annually to limit vegetation height to 18 inches. More frequent mowing to maintain aesthetic appeal may be necessary in landscaped areas. When mowing is performed, a mulching mower should be used, or grass clippings should be caught and removed. ■ Debris and litter will accumulate near the basin pump and should be removed during regular mowing operations and inspections. Particular attention should be paid to floating debris that can eventually clog the irrigation system. 	<p>Semi-annual</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The pond side slopes and embankment may periodically suffer from slumping and erosion, although this should not occur often if the soils are properly compacted during construction. Regrading and revegetation may be required to correct the problems. 	<p>Infrequently</p>