



**Standard Operating Procedure:
Disposal of Landscape Organic Waste**

Date: 5/13/2022* Version: 3 Review Frequency: Annual

Reasons for Procedure

The University of Virginia (UVA) has a permit to operate a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) issued by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. This permit authorizes UVA to discharge stormwater pursuant to the Virginia Stormwater Management Program and the Virginia Stormwater Management Act. The permit requires that maintenance activities, such as landscaping, be conducted in such a manner that contaminants are not released into the stormwater drainage network.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that wastes generated as a result of landscaping or landscape maintenance operations do not clog or cause contamination of the stormwater sewer system.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all landscaping maintenance activities and operations performed on UVA property whether by employees or outside contract companies.

3.0 Responsibility

3.1 Managers and Construction Project Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff or contractors who generate and handle landscaping waste are trained on the correct methods of disposing of landscape waste materials. Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring training is conducted with the most recent version of the SOP.

3.2 Personnel Performing the Job

Personnel performing the job are responsible for following the correct procedures for landscape waste disposal.

4.0 Procedures

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4.1 Vegetation Maintenance

All vegetation shall be maintained to keep stormwater conveyances, including drains, clear and free of vegetative debris.

4.2 Landscape Waste Generation

Any organic, plant or soil wastes generated as a result of landscape maintenance, including but not limited to leaves, soil cores, grass clippings, or other debris shall be handled in an environmentally responsible manner to reduce likelihood of this material entering stormwater conveyances or local streams.

4.2.1 Grass Clippings

Grass clippings shall be collected or blown back on to grassed areas. In no cases shall grass clippings be blown onto pavement, where they can then be washed down a storm drain.

4.2.2 Soil Cores

Soil cores shall remain on grassed areas so that any soil runoff remains on the landscaped areas.

4.2.3 Leaves

Leaves shall be picked up as promptly as practical in order to keep storm drains clear from obstruction, which could cause damaging flooding, and keep leaves from entering the storm sewer system. In the event leaves cannot be picked up in a timely manner, they should be blown back onto vegetated surfaces.

4.2.4 Sticks, limbs, or whole vegetation

Limbs, sticks, or other vegetative debris generated either as a result of maintenance activities or from natural causes should be cleaned up immediately upon generation or discovery. If vegetative debris cannot be removed from a site in a timely manner, it should be moved to a vegetated area where it cannot block stormwater conveyances or storm drains.

4.3 Proper Disposal

UVA has a vegetative debris collection site located on Observatory Hill. All vegetative waste that cannot be re-used on site should be taken to this site. Departments can contact UVA Landscaping (434-982-4668) in order to make arrangements to bring material to the collection site. Contractors performing work, unless otherwise directed, are responsible for proper offsite disposal of materials.

5.0 Review of Procedure/Training

All managers and personnel who perform routine landscaping duties are responsible for reviewing this procedure at least once every 24 months. Any project managers who hire contractors to perform these job duties are required to convey the requirements of this procedure to the contractors.

6.0 Regulatory impacts

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Discharges of any material other than stormwater are prohibited by the University's MS4 permit. This offense is punishable by civil and criminal penalties as illicit discharges constitute a threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, and are deemed public nuisances.

*Printed versions of SOPs with previous review dates are considered current as long as the version number is the same as the current version. Current versions of all SOPs are maintained on the UVA Environmental Resources website.