

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ILLINOIS URBAN MANUAL
PRACTICE STANDARD

Temporary Seeding

(acres or square feet)

Code 965



Source: VA Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook

Definition

Planting rapid-growing annual grasses or small grains, to provide initial, temporary cover for erosion control on disturbed areas.

Purpose

The purpose of this practice is to temporarily stabilize denuded areas that will not be brought to final grade or on which construction will be stopped for a period of more than 14 working days.

Temporary seeding helps reduce runoff and erosion until permanent vegetation or other erosion control measures can be established. In addition, it provides residue for soil protection during seedbed preparation and reduces problems of mud and dust production from bare soil surfaces during construction.

Conditions Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all cleared, unvegetated, or sparsely vegetated soil surfaces where vegetative cover is needed for less than 1 year. Applications of this practice include diversions, dams, temporary

sediment basins, temporary road banks, topsoil stockpiles and any other exposed areas of a construction site.

Criteria

Plant Selection – Select plants appropriate to the season and site conditions from Table 1.

Site Preparation – Prior to seeding, install necessary erosion control and sediment control practices if possible.

Remove large rocks or other debris that may interfere with seedbed preparation or seeding operations.

Seedbed Preparation:

1. Liming: Where the pH of the soil is below 5.5, apply one and one half to two tons per acre of finely ground agricultural limestone. If the seeding period is less than 30 days liming will not be required.
2. Fertilizer: Apply 500 pounds per acre of 10-10-10 fertilizer or equivalent. Incorporate lime and fertilizer into the top 2-4 inches of soil. If the seeding period is less than 30 days fertilizer will not be required.
3. Prepare a seedbed of loose soil to a depth of 3 to 4 inches. If recent tillage or grading operations have resulted in a loose surface, additional tillage or roughening may not be required except to break up large clods. If rainfall caused the surface to become sealed or crusted, loosen it just prior to seeding by disking, raking, harrowing, or other suitable methods. Groove or furrow slopes steeper than 3:1 on the contour before seeding.

Seeding – Seed shall be evenly applied with a cyclone seeder, drill, cultipacker seeder or hydroseeder. Small grains shall be planted no more than one inch deep. Grasses shall be planted no more than one half inch deep.

Cover broadcast seedings by cultipacking, dragging a harrow, or raking.

Mulching – Seedings made during optimum spring and summer seeding dates, with favorable soil and site conditions, will not require mulch.

When temporary protection is needed, see Practice Standard [MULCHING 875](#).

Considerations

Temporary seedings should be used to protect earthen structures such as dikes, diversions, dams and other structures used for sediment control during construction. Temporary seedings can also reduce the amount of maintenance these structures may need. For example, the frequency of sediment basin clean-outs will be reduced if watershed areas, outside the active construction zone, are stabilized.

Proper seedbed preparation, selection of appropriate species, and use of quality seed are as important in this practice, as in Practice Standard [PERMANENT VEGETATION 880](#). Failure to follow established guidelines and recommendations carefully might result in an inadequate or short-lived stand of vegetation that will not control erosion.

Temporary seeding provides protection for no more than 1 year, during which time permanent stabilization should be initiated.

Plans and Specifications

Plans and specifications for temporary seeding shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose. At a minimum include the following items:

1. Plant species to be used
2. Dates of seeding
3. Seedbed preparation
4. Fertilization and seeding rates and methods

All plans shall include the installation, inspection, and maintenance schedules with the responsible party identified.

Operation and Maintenance

Reseed areas where seedling emergence is poor, or where erosion occurs, as soon as possible. Protect from vehicular and foot traffic. Control weeds by mowing.

Table 1
Temporary Seeding Species, Rates, and Dates

Species	lbs/Acre	lbs/1,000 ft²	Seeding Dates
Oats	90	2	Early Spring – Jul. 1
Cereal Rye	90	2	Early Spring – Sept. 30
Wheat	90	2	Early Spring – Sept. 30
Perennial Ryegrass	25	0.6	Early Spring – Sept. 30