MULCH STORAGE AND APPLICATION

WWW.UKY.ENV/STORMWATER

Mulch storage areas are capable of contributing high levels of organic contaminants, nutrients, and other pollutants to stormwater. As a result, care should be taken to prevent mulch and mulch by-product runoff from entering the storm sewer system. The University's MS4 Permit only allows clean water discharges into the stormwater system and requires that the University implement Best Management Practices to prevent the discharge of pollutants from campus.

DO

- ✓ Store bulk quantities of mulch on compact impervious surfaces (e.g., concrete or asphalt) or on a compact low-permeable liner (e.g., clay or synthetic liner).
- ✓ Locate storage piles a minimum of 100 feet away from surface waters, storm drains, sinkholes, or other environmentally sensitive features.
- ✓ Shape piles in such a way to shed water easily (no flat tops or depressions where water can pool). Piles should not be greater than 10 feet in height.
- ✓ Equip storage areas with containment tools (e.g., berms, silt fencing, vegetative buffer zones, etc.) to prevent migration of mulch or leachate.
- ✓ Handle and move mulch using clean, leak-free equipment to avoid any contamination of the storage area.
- ✓ Hydraulically apply or appropriately anchor mulch on steep slopes, greater than 2.5:1, or where mulch is susceptible to movement by wind or water.



Required Training: 1 per year

Relevant UK Departments:

- Grounds
- Athletics

DON'T

- ✗ Don't allow the release of leachate or runoff from mulch piles to enter storm drains.
- ✗ Don't ignore spilled or wind-blown mulch. Loose material should be cleaned up promptly.
- ✗ Don't allow mulch piles to become compacted and flat-topped, this prevents proper drainage and can lead to pooling and leachate runoff.
- ✗ Don't add chemicals, colorants, or compost accelerants to mulch while in storage. Any additive usage should be approved and documented.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➲ Consider covering mulch piles with breathable tarps during prolonged storage or wet weather to reduce moisture saturation and runoff.
- ➲ Inspect mulch storage and application areas after major rain events to check for erosion, leachate, staining, or movement.

ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

- ☐ Check and replace mulch that has been disturbed after intense weather events or episodes of high winds.
- ☐ Inspect mulch piles and surrounding areas when in use.
- ☐ Inspect and review storage areas and structures MONTHLY.
- ☐ Review and inspect runoff and containment procedures MONTHLY.
- ☐ Ensure personnel responsible for operating and maintaining mulch storage areas complete training ANNUALLY.
- ☐ Conduct personnel briefings with staff responsible for mulch handling/storage minimum ANNUALLY.