

AIR POLLUTION

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Dust: Regulators take aim at next pollutant target

How to prepare your operation for increasingly stringent wind and water erosion controls.

By [PUBLIC WORKS Staff](#)

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By [Lenard Long, PE, CPESC, and Sean Porter, COSWQ, QSD](#)



Author's note: As an engineer looking back on three decades of experience, all our hard work to comply with environmental regulations is paying off through resurging natural habitats in many areas of the country. — Lenard Long

Government regulation of water and air pollutants is nothing new, but federal and state regulations have become progressively more restrictive over the years. Fueled by public outcry and lawsuits brought by environmental groups, the trend is unlikely to abate.

Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act goals are beginning to converge in tougher stormwater and dust-control requirements for jobsites nationwide

Dust control should be integral to mitigating stormwater pollution. Keeping soil on the construction site and out of the air was a primary goal of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) implementation.
Photo: SCS Engineers

- Some states mandate that Storm Water Pollution

Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) be written and implemented by certified inspectors. In California, they're called Qualified SWPPP Developers (QSDs) and Qualified SWPPP Practitioners (QSPs). These individuals are often civil engineers, registered geologists, or erosion-control specialists with training in state-administered testing.

- Delaware requires construction sites to have an "erosion and sediment control responsible person" in addition to the usual supervisors.
- Many states have adopted stormwater permit requirements specific to construction activities.
- A growing number of states are also adopting stormwater-type requirements for wind erosion at landfills and highways.

There's a troublesome complication, however, in that rules and enforcement policies vary by state and even among different regions of the same state. The U.S. EPA is working to standardize requirements across jurisdictional lines, but that's a complicated process — methods that apply in one state may not

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be appropriate for other states because of variations in weather, terrain, soils, ecosystems, etc.

Tip: Regulations change constantly; even California's stringent Construction General Permit requirements of 2010 are expected to be revised later this year. Ask an environmental consultant *before* construction begins how to mitigate soil disruption and dust generation to meet your state's particular requirements.

SIX COMMON AIR POLLUTANTS

Particulate matter and ground-level ozone are the most dangerous of six air pollutants found throughout the United States. Fugitive particulate matter is a concern because it also can include mobilization of fungi or bacteria linked to allergies and asthma reactions. Source: U.S. EPA

- Particle pollution (particulate matter)
- Ground-level ozone
- Carbon monoxide
- Sulfur oxides
- Nitrogen oxides
- Lead

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Air Pollution, Erosion Control, Codes and Standards, Legislation

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Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ

Organization

Environmental Protection Agency

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