

## BMP 6.4.4: Infiltration Trench



An Infiltration Trench is a “leaky” pipe in a stone filled trench with a level bottom. An Infiltration Trench may be used as part of a larger storm sewer system, such as a relatively flat section of storm sewer, or it may serve as a portion of a stormwater system for a small area, such as a portion of a roof or a single catch basin. In all cases, an Infiltration Trench should be designed with a positive overflow.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Key Design Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continuously perforated pipe set at a minimum slope in a stone filled, level-bottomed trench</li> <li>▪ Limited in width (3 to 8 feet) and depth of stone (6 feet max. recommended)</li> <li>▪ Trench is wrapped in nonwoven geotextile (top, sides, and bottom)</li> <li>▪ Placed on uncompacted soils</li> <li>▪ Minimum cover over pipe is as per manufacturer.</li> <li>▪ A minimum of 6" of topsoil is placed over trench and vegetated</li> <li>▪ Positive Overflow always provided</li> </ul> <p>Deed restrictions recommended Not for use in hot spot areas without pretreatment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Potential Applications</u></b></p> <p>Residential: Yes Commercial: Yes Ultra Urban: Yes Industrial: Yes Retrofit: Yes Highway/Road: Yes</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Stormwater Functions</u></b></p> <p>Volume Reduction: Medium Recharge: High Peak Rate Control: Medium Water Quality: High</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Water Quality Functions</u></b></p> <p>TSS: 85% TP: 85% NO3: 30%</p>
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### **Other Considerations**

- **Protocol 1. Site Evaluation and Soil Infiltration Testing** and **Protocol 2. Infiltration Systems Guidelines** should be followed, see Appendix C

## Description

An Infiltration Trench is a linear stormwater BMP consisting of a continuously perforated pipe at a minimum slope in a stone-filled trench (Figure 6.4-1). Usually an Infiltration Trench is part of a **conveyance system** and is designed so that large storm events are conveyed through the pipe with some runoff volume reduction. During small storm events, volume reduction may be significant and there may be little or no discharge. All Infiltration Trenches are designed with a **positive overflow** (Figure 6.4-2).

An Infiltration Trench differs from an Infiltration Bed in that it may be constructed without heavy equipment entering the trench. It is also intended to convey some portion of runoff in many storm events.

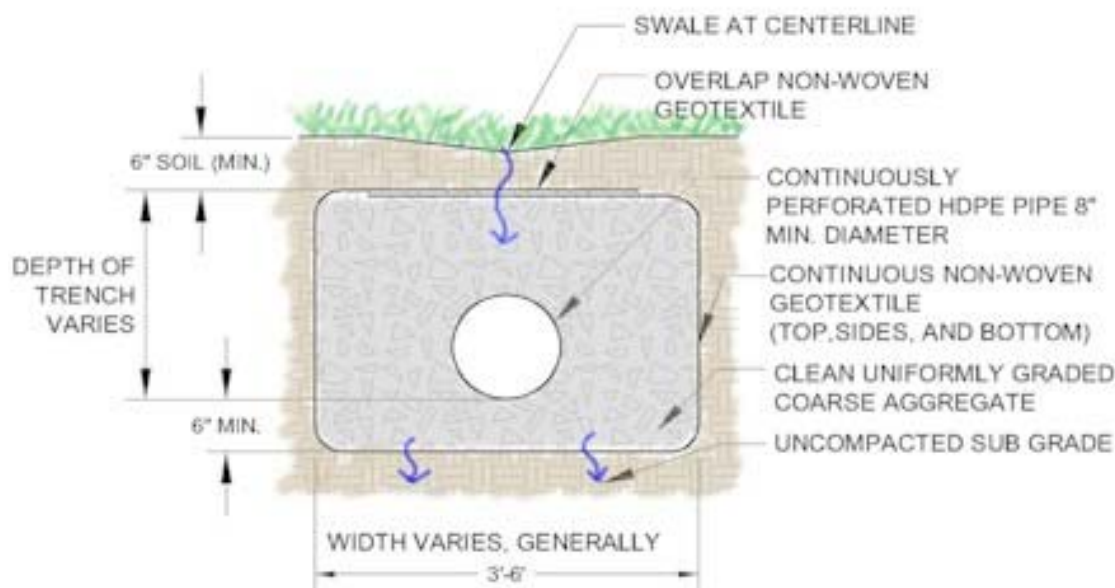


Figure 6.4-1

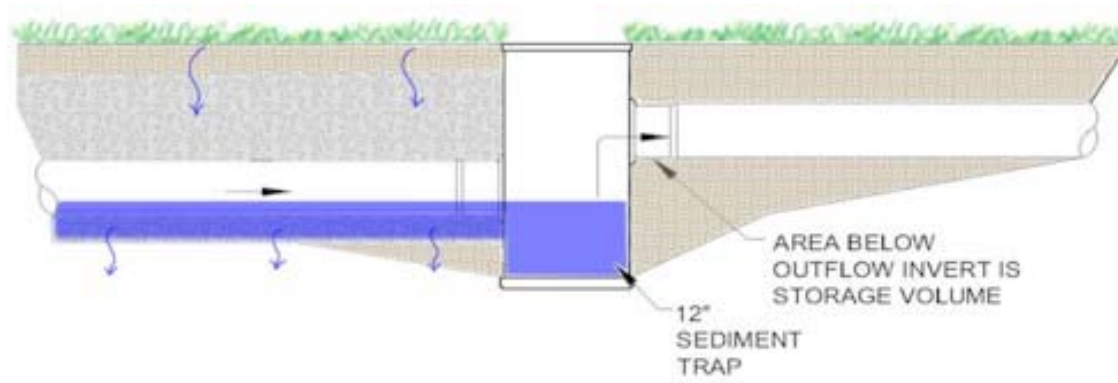


Figure 6.4-2

All Infiltration Trenches should be designed in accordance with Appendix C. Although the width and depth can vary, it is recommended that Infiltration Trenches be limited in depth to not more than six (6)

feet of stone. This is due to both construction issues and Loading Rate issues (as described in the Guidelines for Infiltration Systems). The designer should consider the appropriate depth.

## Variations

Infiltration Trenches generally have a vegetated (grassed) or gravel surface. Infiltration Trenches also may be located alongside or adjacent to roadways or impervious paved areas with proper design. The subsurface drainage direction should be to the downhill side (away from subbase of pavement), or located lower than the impervious subbase layer. Proper measures should be taken to prevent water infiltrating into the subbase of impervious pavement.

Infiltration Trenches may also be located down a mild slope by “stepping” the sections between control structures as shown in Figure 6.4-3. A level or nearly level bottom is recommended for even distribution.

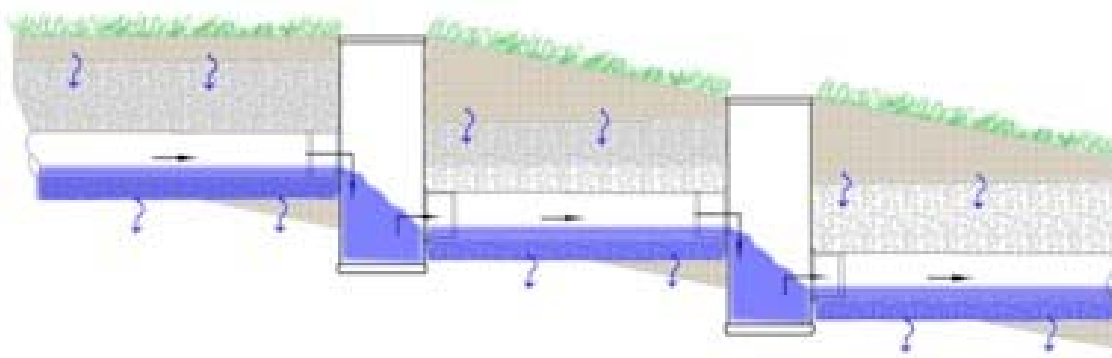


Figure 6.4-3

## Applications

- **Connection of Roof Leaders**

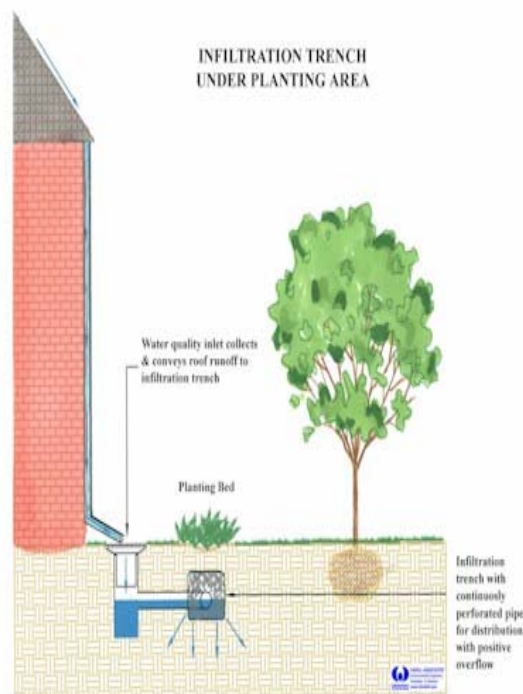
Roof leaders may be connected to Infiltration Trenches. Roof runoff generally has lower sediment levels and often is ideally suited for discharge through an Infiltration Trench. A cleanout with sediment sump should be provided between the building and Infiltration Trench.

- **Connection of Inlets**

Catch Basins, inlets and area drains may be connected to Infiltration Trenches, however sediment and debris removal should be addressed. Structures should include a sediment trap area below the invert of the pipe for solids and debris. In areas of high traffic or areas where excessive sediment, litter, and other similar materials may be generated, a water quality insert or other pretreatment device is needed.

- **In Combination with Vegetative Filters**

An Infiltration Trench may be preceded by or used in combination with a Vegetative Filter, Grassed Swale, or other vegetative element used to reduce sediment levels



from areas such as high traffic roadways. Design should ensure proper functioning of vegetative system.

- **Other Applications**

Other applications of Infiltration Trenches may be determined by the design professional as appropriate.

## **Design Considerations**

1. Soil Investigation and Percolation Testing is required (see Appendix C, Protocol 2)
2. Guidelines for Infiltration Systems should be met (i.e., depth to water table, setbacks, Loading Rates, etc. See Appendix C, Protocol 1)
3. Water Quality Inlet or Catch Basin with Sump (see Section 6.6.4) recommended for all surface inlets, designed to avoid standing water for periods greater than the criteria in Chapter 3.
4. A continuously perforated pipe should extend the length of the trench and have a positive flow connection designed to allow high flows to be conveyed through the Infiltration Trench.
5. The slope of the Infiltration Trench bottom should be level or with a slope no greater than 1%. The Trench may be constructed as a series of "steps" if necessary. A level bottom assures even water distribution and infiltration.
6. Cleanouts or inlets should be installed at both ends of the Infiltration Trench and at appropriate intervals to allow access to the perforated pipe.
7. The discharge or overflow from the Infiltration Trench should be properly designed for anticipated flows.

## **Detailed Stormwater Functions**

### **Infiltration Area**

The Infiltration Area is the bottom area of the Trench\*, defined as:

Length of Trench x Width of Trench = Infiltration Area (Bottom Area)

This is the area to be considered when evaluating the Loading Rate to the Infiltration Trench.

\* Some credit can be taken for the side area that is frequently inundated as appropriate.

### **Volume Reduction Calculations**

Volume = Depth\* (ft) x Area (sf) x Void Space

\*Depth is the depth of the water surface during a storm event, depending on the drainage area and conveyance to the bed.

Infiltration Volume = Bed Bottom Area (sf) x Infiltration design rate (in/hr)  
x Infiltration period\* (hr) x (1/12)

\*Infiltration Period is the time when bed is receiving runoff and capable of infiltration. Not to exceed 72 hours.

The void ratio in stone is approximately 40% for AASTO No 3. If the conveyance pipe is within the Storage Volume area, the volume of the pipe may also be included. All Infiltration Trenches should be designed to infiltrate or empty within 72 hours.

**Peak Rate Mitigation Calculations**

See Chapter 8 for Peak Rate Mitigation methodology which addresses link between volume reduction and peak rate control.

**Water Quality Improvement**

See Chapter 8 for Water Quality Improvement methodology which addresses pollutant removal effectiveness of this BMP.

**Construction Sequence**

1. Protect Infiltration Trench area from compaction prior to installation.
2. If possible, install Infiltration Trench during later phases of site construction to prevent sedimentation and/or damage from construction activity. After installation, prevent sediment laden water from entering inlets and pipes.
3. Install and maintain proper Erosion and Sediment Control Measures during construction.
4. Excavate Infiltration Trench bottom to a uniform, level uncompacted subgrade free from rocks and debris. Do NOT compact subgrade.
5. Place nonwoven geotextile along bottom and sides of trench\*. Nonwoven geotextile rolls should overlap by a minimum of 16 inches within the trench. Fold back and secure excess geotextile during stone placement.
6. Install upstream and downstream Control Structures, cleanouts, etc.
7. Place uniformly graded, clean-washed aggregate in 8-inch lifts, lightly compacting between lifts.
8. Install Continuously Perforated Pipe as indicated on plans. Backfill with uniformly graded, clean-washed aggregate in 8-inch lifts, lightly compacting between lifts.
9. Fold and secure nonwoven geotextile over Infiltration Trench, with minimum overlap of 16-inches.
10. Place 6-inch lift of approved Topsoil over Infiltration Trench, as indicated on plans.
11. Seed and stabilize topsoil.
12. Do not remove Inlet Protection or other Erosion and Sediment Control measures until site is fully stabilized.
13. Any sediment that enters inlets during construction is to be removed within 24 hours.







*(from left to right) Installation of Inlets and Control Structure; Non-woven Geotextile is folded over Infiltration Trench; Stabilized Site*



*(Clockwise from top left) Infiltration Trench is on downhill side of roadway; Infiltration Trench is installed; Infiltration Trench is paved with standard pavement material*

## Maintenance and Inspection Issues

- Catch Basins and Inlets should be inspected and cleaned at least 2 times per year.
- The vegetation along the surface of the Infiltration Trench should be maintained in good condition, and any bare spots revegetated as soon as possible.
- Vehicles should not be parked or driven on a vegetated Infiltration Trench, and care should be taken to avoid excessive compaction by mowers.

## Cost Issues

The construction cost of infiltration trenches can vary greatly depending on the configuration, location, site-specific conditions, etc. Typical construction costs in 2003 dollars range from \$4 - \$9 per cubic foot of storage provided (SWRPC, 1991; Brown and Schueler, 1997). Annual maintenance costs have been reported to be approximately 5 to 10 percent of the capital costs (Schueler, 1987).

## Specifications

The following specifications are provided for information purposes only. These specifications include information on acceptable materials for typical applications, but are by no means exclusive or limiting. The designer is responsible for developing detailed specifications for individual design projects in accordance with the project conditions.

**1. Stone** for infiltration trenches shall be 2-inch to 1-inch uniformly graded coarse aggregate, with a wash loss of no more than 0.5%, AASHTO size number 3 per AASHTO Specifications, Part I, 19th Ed., 1998, or later and shall have voids 40% as measured by ASTM-C29.

**2. Non-Woven Geotextile** shall consist of needled nonwoven polypropylene fibers and meet the following properties:

- a. Grab Tensile Strength (ASTM-D4632)
  - b. Mullen Burst Strength (ASTM-D3786)
  - c. Flow Rate (ASTM-D4491)
  - d. UV Resistance after 500 hrs (ASTM-D4355) 70%
  - e. Heat-set or heat-calendared fabrics are not permitted
- Acceptable types include Mirafi 140N, Amoco 4547, and Geotex 451.

**3. Pipe** shall be continuously perforated, smooth interior, with a minimum inside diameter of 8-inches. High-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe shall meet AASHTO M252, Type S or AASHTO M294, Type S.

## References

Brown and Schueler, *Stormwater Management Fact Sheet: Infiltration Trench*. 1997.

Schueler, T., 1987. *Controlling urban runoff: a practical manual for planning and designing urban BMPs*, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Washington, DC

SWRPC, The Use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Urban Watersheds, US Environmental Protection Agency, 1991.

