

## What is a surface sand filter?

A surface sand filter is typically a depression in the ground that is filled with layers of sand and gravel to filter out pollutants and retain excess rainwater. Most surface sand filters are installed with one or more observation wells, depending on size. Often an overflow drain pipe is installed within the gravel layer to direct high flows to an alternative treatment area or storm drain. Surface sand filters can be open sand pits or stabilized with grass.

Typical surface sand filter



## Who is responsible for this maintenance?

As the property owner, you are responsible for all maintenance of your surface sand filter.

## SUGGESTED MAINTENANCE ACTIONS\*

### MONTHLY

- Remove trash and debris from all areas in and around the surface sand filter.

### AS NEEDED

- Mow area surrounding surface sand filter being careful not to blow grass clippings into it.
- Rake sand as needed to avoid compaction.
- Inspect the surface sand filter during and after storms to ensure proper rainwater infiltration.
- Inform contractors working on your property of the location of the surface sand filter to avoid accidental damage.
- Remove all grass, weeds, and other woody debris from the surface sand filter.
- Check for signs of animal burrowing in the sand pit. Contact Animal Control for instruction on how to relocate any burrowing animals.

### DO NOT:

- Remove, alter, or pave over your surface sand filter. If you claimed your surface sand filter for the Stormwater Credit Program, removing or modifying it can result in loss of credit.
- Allow children to play in the surface sand filter.
- Blow grass clippings into the surface sand filter.
- Place decks, sheds, or other structures on top of your surface sand filter.

*\* Please refer to the Maryland Stormwater Design Manual, Volumes I and II for minimum requirements and procedures for maintaining BMPs. This document serves as the official guide for stormwater management principles, methods, and practices in the State of Maryland. Visit <http://bit.ly/MDESWDM>.*

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN YOUR SURFACE SAND FILTER

An unmaintained surface sand filter area may:

- Stop filtering the rainwater and allow pollutants to enter into our local streams.
- Be difficult or expensive to repair if left unmaintained.
- Allow water to pool on the surface long enough to allow mosquitoes or other insects to breed (longer than 3 days).
- Cause flooding on other areas of your property.

## Troubleshooting Issues

Symptom	Possible Cause	Solution
Standing water in the surface sand filter.	Clogging due to leaf litter, grass clippings, sediment, or debris accumulation.	If standing water occurs longer than 2 or 3 days the surface sand filter may be clogged. Remove any visible debris from the area.
Rainwater is not flowing into the infiltration area	Leaves, sediment, or other debris may be blocking the flowpath.	Remove any visible debris from the sand filter area and the flowpath. Be sure to check that paved surfaces are also clear.
Sediment is accumulating in the surface sand filter.	Erosion may be occurring near the flowpath or washing off paved surfaces.	Stabilize any eroded areas with vegetation being careful not to block flow path. Be sure upstream paved surfaces are free of debris.

### Recommended timeframes for routine maintenance

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Remove sediment, leaves and debris		•			•			•			•	
Remove trash	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Weeding surface sand filter area					•	•	•	•	•	•		
Erosion control and mowing	— As needed —											

### Typical Surface Sand Filter Cross Section (for illustrative purposes only)

