

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL

(Ac.)
Code 500



DEFINITION

Removal and disposal of buildings, structures, other works of improvement, vegetation, debris or other materials.

PURPOSE

To safely remove and dispose of unwanted obstructions in order to apply conservation practices or facilitate the planned land use.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On any land where existing obstructions interfere with planned land use development, public safety or infrastructure. This standard is not intended for the removal of obstructions from aquatic environments.

CRITERIA

Plan, design and implement obstruction removal to comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Evaluate and avoid or minimize impact to cultural resources, wetlands and Federal and state protected species to the extent practicable during planning, design and implementation of this conservation practice in accordance with established National and Florida policy, General Manual (GM) Title 420-Part 401; Title 450-Part 401, Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26, National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH) Florida Supplements to Parts 600.1 and 600.6, National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook (NCRPH), National Food Security Act Manual (NFSAM), and the National Environmental Compliance Handbook (NECH).

Remove obstructions by demolition, excavation or other means required for removal. Dispose of all debris from the obstruction removal so that it does not impede subsequent work or cause onsite or offsite damage.

Dispose of nontoxic inorganic materials such as rock piles, boulders, stones, concrete or masonry structures and metal or concrete fence posts by reusing, removal to an approved landfill or recycling center or burial at an approved location.

Dispose of organic materials such as wooden fence posts, woody vegetation, and woody building materials by removal to an approved landfill or recycling center, burial at an approved location or burning if allowed by law. If burning is used, obtain any necessary burning permits and implement appropriate smoke management to protect public health and safety.

Dispose of trash and non-woody building materials in an approved landfill or recycling center.

When removing buildings, ensure that all utilities, such as gas and electric, have been

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

shut off and disconnected from the structure before beginning demolition.

Prior to any work contact utility companies or the state one call system to identify the location of utility lines in the construction area and to arrange the shut off of utilities if necessary.

The removal of obstructions can expose toxic or polluted materials. If toxic or polluted materials are expected to be encountered during the obstruction removal, specify appropriate handling and disposal criteria in the plans and specifications

When removing obstructions that contain chromated copper arsenate (CCA) treated wood, do not dispose by burning. Burning of CCA treated wood can release toxic amounts of arsenic into the air and ash that are very harmful to human and animal health. CCA treated wood should be buried in an approved landfill.

Obstruction removal can result in the disturbance of large areas that are subject to erosion during the demolition process. Where necessary include provisions in the plans to control erosion and offsite sedimentation.

Reshape and regrade all areas disturbed by the obstruction removal so that they blend with the surrounding land features and conditions. Any foundations or below ground portions of the obstruction that remain in place shall have sufficient soil cover to meet the requirements of the planned land use. Compact fill areas according to site specific requirements.

Re-vegetate or otherwise protect disturbed areas from erosion as soon as possible after construction. Refer to Florida NRCS conservation practice standard Critical Area Planting, Code 342 for seedbed preparation, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching requirements.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider the recycling or reuse of materials as the first option for disposal of materials resulting from obstruction removal. Most woody debris can be recycled into mulch or other products. Recycling or other environmentally friendly options exist for the disposal of many other materials.

Demolition activities can generate large amounts of dust. Where necessary, consider using dust suppression techniques such as

spraying water over the removal site to suppress dust.

Obstruction removal often involves heavy equipment working in environmentally sensitive areas. Ensure that servicing and refueling of equipment is accomplished in a manner that does not adversely affect the environment.

Demolition of structures and the removal of debris can be a hazardous undertaking. This is especially true for the removal of downed and tangled trees. This type of work should be performed by licensed qualified personnel using proper equipment and following appropriate safety procedures.

Old buildings, structures and trees can provide habitat for wildlife. The potential for use by and presence of at-risk species should be considered and addressed prior to any obstruction removal activity. The presence of roosting birds and bats may also pose a health and safety hazard to workers and should be considered.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Prepare plans and specifications for obstruction removal that describe the requirements for applying the practice according to this standard. Plans and specifications for this practice shall be included in the plans for the practice it supports. As a minimum the plans and specifications shall include:

1. A plan view showing the location of the obstruction removal site.
2. Details describing the types of materials to be removed and the extent of the removal.
3. Details and location for the disposal of materials resulting from removing the obstructions.
4. Details of how the site will be graded, shaped and stabilized after removing obstructions.
5. Construction specifications that describe in writing site specific requirements for the obstruction removal (e.g. compaction requirements, vegetative requirements, etc.).
6. Location of utilities and notification requirements.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Prepare an operation and maintenance plan for the operator. Operation and maintenance (O&M) for this practice may be addressed in the O&M plans for the practice it supports. The minimum requirements to be addressed in the operation and maintenance plan are:

1. Periodic checking to ensure the site remains stable after construction.
2. When disposal of debris occurs on site, periodic checking to ensure that the disposal site remains stable.

REFERENCES

Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standard
Critical Area Planting, Code 342
General Manual (GM)
Title 420-Part 401
Title 450-Part 401
Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26
National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook
National Environmental Compliance Handbook
National Food Security Act Manual
National Planning Procedures Handbook
Florida Supplements to Parts 600.1 and
600.6
Safety and Health Regulations for Construction,
29 CFR 1926, Occupational Safety and
Health Administration, U.S. Department of
Labor.