

Diversion

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Stillwater, OK

January 1999



WHAT IS A DIVERSION?

A diversion is an earthen ridge and channel constructed across the slope.

HOW IT HELPS THE LAND

Diversions protect cropland, pastureland, farmsteads, feedlots or conservation practices from excess runoff water. They are also used to divert excess runoff to other areas where it is needed. Diversions may also be used as part of pollution abatement systems.

WHERE THE PRACTICE APPLIES

Diversions can be used where excess runoff water damages cropland, pastureland, farmsteads, feedlots or conservation practices. Diversions may also be used to divert excess runoff to other areas for storage such as ponds or reservoirs. They may also be used to collect waste materials such as animal waste and divert it to storage facilities as part of a pollution abatement system.

WHERE TO GET HELP

For assistance in planning, designing and establishing diversions on your farm, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service or Conservation District office

REQUIREMENTS FOR DIVERSIONS

Diversions are designed to safely carry runoff water from the area that drains into them to a stable outlet

or storage facility. Use a natural stable outlet where possible.

Diversions are designed to carry the peak runoff from the 10-year frequency, 24-hour duration storm.

Diversions may be constructed in either cropland or grassland.

Side slopes should not be steeper than a ratio of three horizontal to one vertical. Flatter side slopes may be desirable to facilitate mowing operations in pasture, or farming operations in cropland.

APPLYING THE PRACTICE

The practice is considered applied when the diversion has been constructed to the lines and grades shown on the designs and drawings and permanent vegetation has been established.

OUTLETS

Use a stable natural outlet where possible. Where stable vegetated outlets cannot be established, grade stabilization structures, underground outlets or other suitable outlets may be required.

VEGETATION

Diversions designed for permanent vegetation must have vegetation established according to Conservation Practice Standard, Critical Area Planting (342).

MAINTAINING THE PRACTICE

Maintain the diversion height to prevent overtopping and breaks during heavy rains. If breaks occur, repair them promptly.

Remove silt blocks as needed to avoid ponding and to maintain channel capacity.

Control rodents or burrowing animals.

Keep outlet ends of diversions open, except for diversions specifically designed as level diversions. If excessive grades or overfills develop at the outlet, repair by shaping, vegetating, or use other stabilization measures.

Manage grazing to maintain an adequate vegetative cover and to reduce livestock trailing.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
