

SURFACE STABILIZATION

Temporary Seeding



Temporary seeding involves the establishment of rapid growing annual grasses or small grains to stabilize disturbed areas until such time as a permanent, nonerosive cover can be established.

Purpose

- To provide vegetative cover where permanent seeding is not desirable or practical.
- To reduce erosion and sedimentation damage by stabilizing disturbed areas.
- To reduce problems associated with mud or dust from unvegetated soil surfaces during construction.
- To reduce sediment-laden storm water runoff from being transported to downstream areas.
- To improve visual aesthetics of construction areas.

Specifications

Seedbed Preparation

Grade and apply soil amendments.

Seeding Frequency

Seed rough graded areas daily while soil is still loose and moist.

Density of Vegetative Cover

Eighty percent or greater over the soil surface.

TEMPORARY SEEDING

Materials

- Soil Amendments – Select materials and rates as determined by a soil test (contact your county soil and water conservation district or cooperative extension office for assistance and soil information, including available soil testing services) or 400 to 600 pounds of 12-12-12 analysis fertilizer, or equivalent. Consider the use of reduced phosphorus application where soil tests indicate adequate phosphorous levels in the soil profile.
- Seed – Select appropriate plant species seed or seed mixtures on the basis of quick germination, growth, and time of year to be seeded (see Table 1).
- Mulch –
 - Straw, hay, wood fiber, etc. (to protect seedbed, retain moisture, and encourage plant growth).
 - Anchored to prevent removal by wind or water or covered with manufactured erosion control blankets.

Table 1. Temporary Seeding Specifications

Seed Species ¹	Rate per Acre	Planting Depth	Optimum Dates ²
Wheat or Rye	150 lbs.	1 to 1½ inches	Sept. 15 – Oct. 30
Spring Oats	100 lbs.	1 inch	March 1 – April 15
Annual Ryegrass	40 lbs.	¼ inch	March 1 – May 1 Aug. 1 – Sept. 1
German Millet	40 lbs.	1 to 2 inches	May 1 – June 1
Sudangrass	35 lbs.	1 to 2 inches	May 1 – July 30
Buckwheat	60 lbs.	1 to 2 inches	April 15 – June 1
Corn (<i>broadcast</i>)	300 lbs.	1 to 2 inches	May 11 – Aug. 10
Sorghum	35 lbs.	1 to 2 inches	May 1 – July 15

¹Perennial species may be used as a temporary cover, especially if the area to be seeded will remain idle for more than one year (see **Permanent Seeding** on page 35).

²Seeding done outside the optimum seeding dates increases the chances of seeding failure. Dates may be extended or shortened based on the location of the project site within the state.

Notes:

Mulch alone is an acceptable temporary cover and may be used in lieu of temporary seeding, provided that it is appropriately anchored.

A high potential for fertilizer, seed, and mulch to wash exists on steep banks, cuts, and in channels and areas of concentrated flow.

TEMPORARY SEEDING

Application

Seedbed Preparation

1. Test soil to determine pH and nutrient levels.
2. Apply soil amendments as recommended by the soil test. If testing is not done, apply 400 to 600 pounds per acre of 12-12-12 analysis fertilizer, or equivalent.
3. Work the soil amendments into the upper two to four inches of the soil with a disk or rake operated across the slope.

Seeding

1. Select a seed species or an appropriate seed mixture and application rate from Table 1.
2. Apply seed uniformly with a drill or cultipacker seeder or by broadcasting. Plant or cover seed to the depth shown in Table 1.

Notes:

1. If drilling or broadcasting the seed, ensure good seed-to-soil contact by firming the seedbed with a roller or cultipacker after completing seeding operations.
 2. Daily seeding when the soil is moist is usually most effective.
 3. If seeding is done with a hydroseeder, fertilizer and mulch can be applied with the seed in a slurry mixture.
3. Apply mulch (see **Mulching** on page 55 or **Compost Mulching** on page 59) and anchor it in place.

Maintenance

- Inspect within 24 hours of each rain event and at least once every seven calendar days.
- Check for erosion or movement of mulch and repair immediately.
- Monitor for erosion damage and adequate cover (80 percent density); reseed, fertilize, and apply mulch where necessary.
- If nitrogen deficiency is apparent, top-dress fall seeded wheat or rye seeding with 50 pounds per acre of nitrogen in February or March.