

Erosion Control Mats & Blankets



What are these?

Erosion mats and blankets are used as a soil cover and a protective barrier for vegetation establishment. They are applied on soils with a high erosion risk, on steep sites or for site rehabilitation. When applied correctly, they are one of the most effective and practical means of controlling runoff and erosion on disturbed land prior to vegetation establishment.

Why is it important?

Sediment generated from erosion on building and construction sites can be a major source of pollution to local waterways. Follow the practices discussed in this fact sheet and you will minimise erosion from your site, meet your legal requirements and help protect our waterways.

Fact Sheet 8

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Before starting site works:

Identify where erosion is likely to occur i.e. areas of bare soil, especially on slopes steeper than 3:1 or when there is a delay in building and construction work or site rehabilitation. Select erosion control mats or erosion control blankets.

Erosion control mats: are heavier, synthetic and non-degradable, they are designed to add stability to soils and are often filled with topsoil, and vegetated when installed. Erosion control mats are suitable on slopes and in channel-lining applications.

Erosion control blankets: are light-weight and open-weave made from mulch, straw and wood fibre and held together by natural or synthetic netting. They are used for establishing and reinforcing vegetation. Their application depends on the blanket materials. Synthetic netting and wood fibre is stronger and can be used on steeper slopes compared to jute and straw blankets, which rapidly degrade and are more suitable for flatter areas. Check with suppliers of erosion control blankets about the applications of their different products.

Erosion control blankets can be used in conjunction with soil seeding, preventing the seed washing away and erosion of the prepared seedbed. Once established, the vegetation provides permanent erosion control.

Document erosion control mats and blankets on your Soil and Water Management Plan (if required) (see **Fact Sheet 3**).

Installing the control measures:

Erosion control mats should be installed immediately on exposed soils, while erosion control blankets should be fitted on newly seeded or landscaped areas. See **Figures 8A and 8B** for their installation guidelines.

Maintaining the control measures:

Close inspection after rainfall events and major runoff occurrences is essential. Check for damage due to water running under the mat or blanket or if it has been displaced by wind. Restabilise with anchor pins or wooden spikes. If significant erosion has occurred repair the fabric. Grading and reseedling may also be necessary. Continue inspections until vegetation is firmly established.

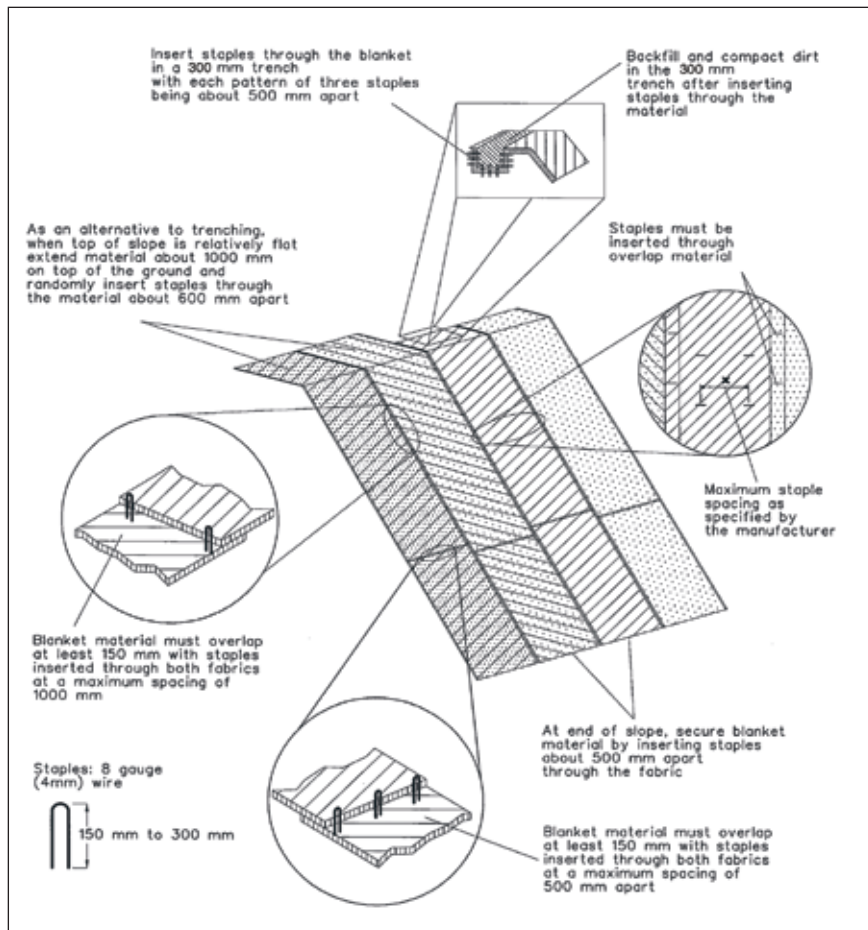


Figure 8A: Installation of an erosion control blanket on a hillside.

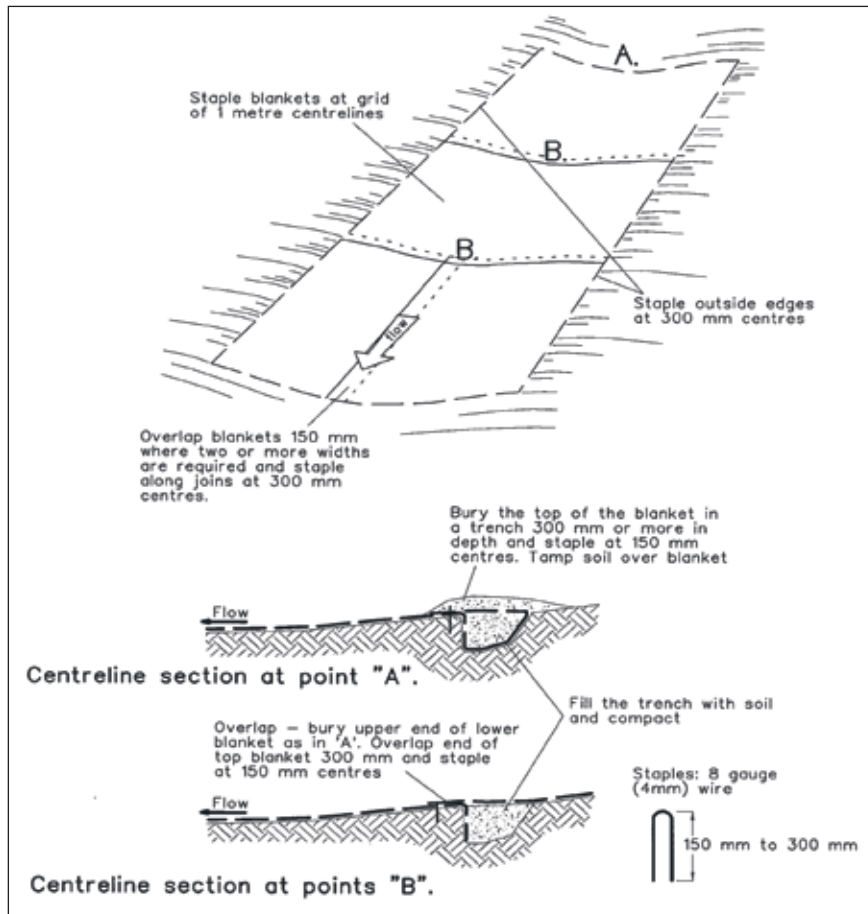


Figure 8B: Erosion control mat used to line a channel.

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Remember:

Everyone working on building and construction sites has a responsibility to prevent pollution. If you do have an accident and pollution occurs you are required by law to notify the site supervisor. If the site supervisor cannot be contacted, workers should immediately notify the local council so they can work with you to minimise any harm to the environment.

Acknowledgement:

Figures 8A & 8B from Landcom 2004 "Soils & Construction Volume I Managing Urban Stormwater (4th edition)".

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