STD & SPEC 3.12

DIVERSION

Definition

A channel constructed across a slope with a supporting earthen ridge on the lower side.

Purpose

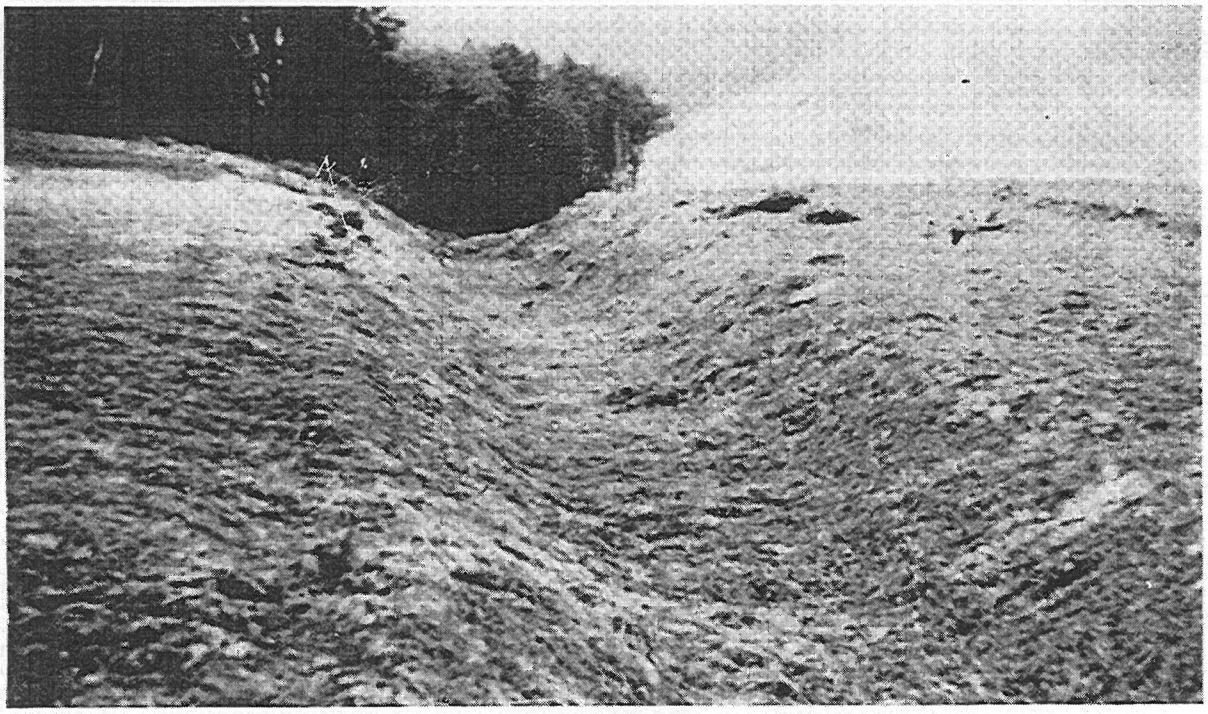
To reduce slope length and to intercept and divert stormwater runoff to stabilized outlets at non-erosive velocities.

Conditions Where Practice Applies

1. Where runoff from areas of higher elevation may damage property, cause erosion, or interfere with the establishment of vegetation on lower areas.

2. Where surface and/or shallow subsurface flow is damaging sloping upland.

3. Where the slope length needs to be reduced to minimize soil loss.



Planning Considerations

Diversions can be useful tools for managing surface water flows and preventing soil erosion. On moderately sloping areas, they may be placed at intervals to trap and divert sheet flow before it has a chance to concentrate and cause rill and gully erosion. They may be placed at the top of cut or fill slopes to keep runoff from upland drainage areas off the slope. They can also be used to protect structures, parking lots, adjacent properties, and other special areas from flooding.

Diversions are preferable to other types of man-made stormwater conveyance systems because they more closely simulate natural flow patterns and characteristics. Flow velocities are generally kept to a minimum. When properly coordinated into the landscape design of a site, diversions can be visually pleasing as well as functional.

As with any earthen structure, it is very important to establish adequate vegetation as soon as possible after installation. It is equally important to stabilize the drainage area above the diversion so that sediment will not enter and accumulate in the diversion channel.

Design Criteria

Location

Diversion location shall be determined by considering outlet conditions, topography, land use, soil type, length of slope, seepage planes (where seepage is a problem) and the development layout.

Capacity

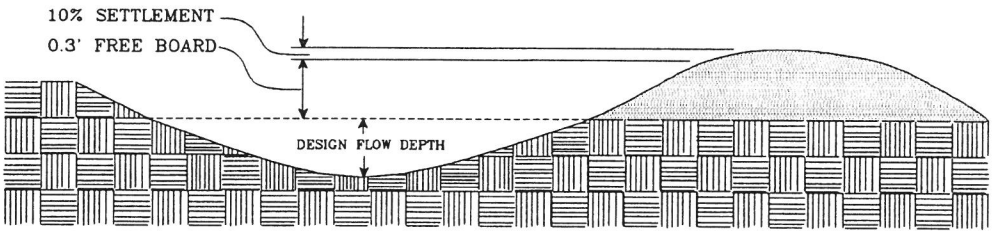
1. The diversion channel must have a minimum capacity to carry the runoff expected from a 10-year frequency storm with a freeboard of at least 0.3 foot (see Plate 3.12-1).

2. Diversions designed to protect homes, schools, industrial buildings, roads, parking lots, and comparable high-risk areas, and those designed to function in connection with other structures, shall have sufficient capacity to carry peak runoff expected from a storm frequency consistent with the hazard involved.

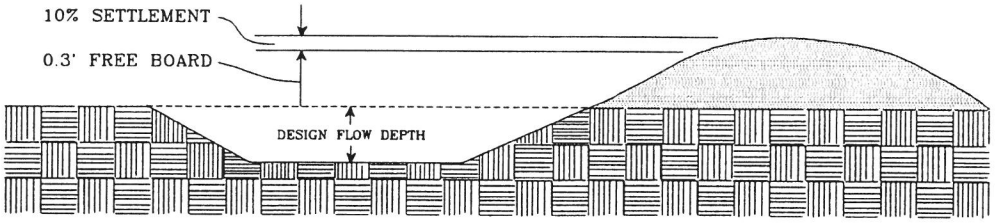
Channel Design

The diversion channel may be parabolic, trapezoidal or vee-shaped and shall be designed and constructed according to Std. & Spec. 3.17, STORMWATER CONVEYANCE CHANNELS.

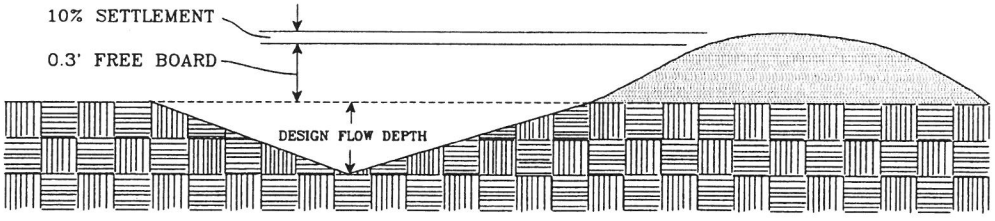
DIVERSIONS



TYPICAL PARABOLIC DIVERSION



TYPICAL TRAPEZOIDAL DIVERSION



TYPICAL VEE-SHAPED DIVERSION

Source: Va. DSWC

Plate 3.12-1

Ridge Design

The supporting ridge cross-section shall meet the following criteria (see Plate 3.12-1):

1. The side slopes shall be no steeper than 2:1.

2. The width at the design water elevation shall be a minimum of 4 feet.

3. The minimum freeboard shall be 0.3 foot.

4. The design shall include a 10 percent settlement factor.

Outlet

Diversions shall have adequate outlets which will convey concentrated runoff without erosion. Acceptable outlets include STORMWATER CONVEYANCE CHANNEL (Std. & Spec. 3.17); LEVEL SPREADER (Std. & Spec. 3.21); OUTLET PROTECTION (Std. & Spec. 3.18); and PAVED FLUME (Std. & Spec. 3.16).

Stabilization

1. The ridge and channel shall be seeded and mulched immediately following their construction in accordance with Std. & Spec. 3.32, PERMANENT SEEDING.

2. Disturbed areas draining into the diversion should normally be seeded and mulched prior to the time the diversion is constructed. Sediment trapping measures must remain in place to prevent soil movement into the diversion if upslope area is not stabilized.

Construction Specifications

1. All trees, brush, stumps, obstructions, and other objectionable material shall be removed and disposed of so as not to interfere with the proper functioning of the diversion.

2. The diversion shall be excavated or shaped to line, grade, and cross-section as required to meet the criteria specified herein, free of irregularities which will impede flow.

3. Fills shall be compacted as needed to prevent unequal settlement that would cause damage in the completed diversion. Fill shall be composed of soil which is free from excessive organic debris, rocks or other objectionable materials.

4. All earth removed and not needed in construction shall be spread or disposed of so that it will not interfere with the functioning of the diversion.

5. Permanent stabilization of disturbed areas shall be done in accordance with the applicable standard and specification contained in this handbook. Permanent stabilization techniques include PERMANENT SEEDING (Std. & Spec. 3.32).

Maintenance

Before final stabilization, the diversion should be inspected after every rainfall and at least once every two weeks. Sediment shall be removed from the channel and repairs made as necessary. Seeded areas which fail to establish a vegetative cover shall be reseeded as necessary.