

# Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## Technical Standard

### Non-Channel Erosion Mat

#### 1052

#### DEFINITION

A protective soil cover made of straw, wood, coconut fiber or other suitable plant residue, or plastic fibers formed into a mat, usually with a plastic or biodegradable mesh on one or both sides. Erosion mats are rolled products available in many varieties and combinations of material and with varying life spans.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this practice is to protect the soil surface from the erosive effect of rainfall and prevent erosion during the establishment of grass or other vegetation, and to reduce soil moisture loss due to evaporation. This practice applies to both *Erosion Control Revegetative Mats (ECRM)* and *Turf-Reinforcement Mats (TRM)*.

#### CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This standard applies to erosion mat selection for use on erodible slopes.

This standard is not for *channel* erosion. For channel applications, reference WDNR Technical Standard (1053) Channel Erosion Mat.

Be aware of applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, or permit requirements governing the use and placement of erosion mat. This standard does not contain the text of federal, state, or local laws.

#### CRITERIA

##### Products

Use erosion mat products identified on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Erosion Control Product Acceptability List (PAL).

##### Selection

Use WisDOT PAL classes and types to select and specify erosion mat.

Select the appropriate erosion mat based on site specific slope and slope length conditions in accordance with the WisDOT Facilities Development Manual (FDM Section 10-5) Slope Erosion Control Matrix.

Select erosion mat that will last long enough for turf grass or other vegetation to become densely established.

Use only mats containing exclusively organic material (no plastic) in or near *waterways* or other sensitive areas.

**Installation**

Install and anchor erosion mat in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

At the time of installation, retain material labels and manufacturer's installation instructions until the site has been stabilized.

Install ECRMs after topsoil is placed and seeding is complete.

Install TRMs in conjunction with placement of topsoil, followed by ECRM installation.

Install erosion mat so that it bears completely on the soil surface.

Use staples that are at least 6 inches long.

Do not install Class I or Class II - Type B products that incorporate photo- or bio-degradable netting after September 1<sup>st</sup> of a given year.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Use Class I Urban mats in locations where shortly mowed turf grasses are to be established.

ECRMs without topsoiling and seeding can be used for temporary soil stabilization during the non-growing season or for periods of inactivity.

Slope interruption products that are designed, installed and maintained in accordance with DNR Interim Manufactured Perimeter Control and Slope Interruption Products Technical Standard 1071 can be used to reduce slope length.

Some erosion mat products can have detrimental effects on local wildlife. Plastic netting without independent movement of strands can easily entrap small animals moving through the area, leading to dehydration, desiccation, and eventually mortality. Netting that contains biodegradable thread with the "leno" or "gauze" weave (contains strands that can move independently) have the least impact on wildlife.

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Prepare plans and specifications in accordance with the criteria of this standard and describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Inspect erosion mat at least weekly and within 24 hours after every precipitation event that produces 0.5 inches of rain or more during a 24-hour period.

If there are signs of rilling under the mat, install more staples or more frequent anchoring trenches. If rilling becomes severe enough to prevent establishment of vegetation, remove the section of mat where the damage has occurred. Fill the eroded area with topsoil, compact, reseed and replace the section of mat, trenching and overlapping ends per manufacturer's recommendations. Additional staking is recommended near where rilling was filled.

In situations where soil type, topography, or other conditions result in poor observed performance, use multiple practices such as adding mulch under the mat, or installing appropriately placed check devices to reduce local velocity.

If the reinforcing plastic netting has separated from the mat, remove the plastic and if necessary replace the mat.

Complete maintenance as soon as possible with consideration to site conditions.

## REFERENCES

WisDOT "Erosion Control Product Acceptability List" is available online at:

<http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/eng-consultants/cnslt-rsrcs/tools/pal/default.aspx>

## DEFINITIONS

*Erosion Control Revegetative Mats (ECRM) (II)*: A blanket like covering laid on top of a prepared seed bed to protect the soil and seed from the erosive forces of nature.

*Turf-Reinforcement Mats (TRM) (II)*: Helps to permanently stabilize the soil by acting as reinforcement for the roots of the vegetation. This open weaved, synthetic mat is installed on top of soil and filled with topsoil and seeded. As the vegetation grows, the roots intertwine into the mat and reinforces the turf.

*Channel*: A constructed swale or ditch designed to convey storm water.

*Waterways*: Natural watercourses such as lakes or streams.