



Soil Permits – Frequently Asked Questions

District of North Vancouver
Environment Department - 355 West Queens Rd, North Vancouver, BC V7N 4N5

Questions about this form: Phone: 604-990-2311 or Email: enviopermits@dnv.org

Q. Why do I need a Soil Permit?

- A. Construction and / or other types of development such as landscaping work can involve both excavation / removal of soil as well as importing / deposit of soil. The movement of soil onto or away from a site under construction or development can have negative environmental effects if not controlled properly. Sediment and erosion control technology and methods must be applied to eliminate or reduce the damaging effects of uncontrolled release of sediment into the environment.

A Soil Permit is also used to require the application of specific technology and methods to eliminate or reduce the effects associated with the excavation and transport of contaminated soil.

Q. How does uncontrolled sediment release effect the environment?

- A. Fine sediments can smother benthic (bottom dwelling) organisms, preventing them from feeding or getting oxygen, cloud the water so fish (trout & salmon) cannot see their food, damage the gills and eyes and scales of fish, absorb energy from the sun thereby raising the temperature of water in our creeks, and carry toxic pollutants into our waterways

Q. When would I need a Soil Permit?

- A. A Soil Permit is required when amounts of soil, gravel, sand, drain rock or other loose material such as broken concrete or rock (rip rap) greater than 18 cubic metres (approximately two truckloads) are either removed or deposited from a single parcel of land in one calendar year. The Environmental Soil Permit Application can be found on the Environment forms page of the District's web site at <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?a=4747&c=10>

Q. What is a Development Permit Area (DPA)? How do I find out if my property is in a DPA? If it is, does this affect the requirements?

- A. The DNV has identified five Development Permit Areas (DPA's)* that include specific properties or parts of properties. These properties require additional preliminary screening prior to development or construction. There are three Natural Hazard DPA's (Wildfire Protection, Slope Hazard and Creek Hazard) and two environmental DPA's (Natural Environment and Streamside Protection). All of the DPA maps are available for viewing, by the public, on the District's GIS website GEOWeb at the following link <http://geoweb.dnv.org/> The maps can be found under: Applications, properties, layers, layer manager, DPA Streamside, DPA Natural Environment, DPA Creek Hazard, DPA Slope Hazard and DPA Wildfire Hazard.

If your property is either entirely or partially in one or more DPA(s), you may be required to submit a preliminary environmental or engineering report prior to receiving the applicable Environmental (Soil or Tree) Permit(s). Please review all the DPA material (exemptions and guidelines) on the DNV website at <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?a=4409>

*There are other DPA's that may also apply such as Form & Character and Energy efficiency. Please contact DNV Planning staff to inquire about all potentially applicable DPA's on any particular parcel.

Q. What are some common Exemptions (where no Soil Permit is required)?

- A. A Soil Permit is not required to do maintenance work on existing landscaped gardens or lawns. However, new landscaping projects such as retaining walls, planter beds and water features which involve the movement of soil, rock, mulch etc. and / or replacing or removing vegetation may require a permit.

Q. What information do I need to apply for a Soil Permit?

- A. The Environmental Soil Permit Application is available on the District's website <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?a=4747&c=10> In general a Soil Permit application needs to include basic information such as a Site Plan and written description of work. All commercial or industrial zoned parcels that require a Soil Permit also require a sediment and erosion control plan prepared by a suitably qualified professional.

DNV staff will inform customers of any specific requirements such as specialized consultant reports dealing with soil quality and / or contamination.

Q. Are there additional requirements for work close to trees?

- A. If your Soil permit project involves removal or deposit of soil within 5 metres of a tree(s) that is either on your own property or on an adjacent property (including DNV roads or boulevards), you may require additional submission requirements with the Soil permit application. DNV staff will inform customers of any specific additional requirements. Additional requirements may include Tree Location Sketch Plan, and Arborist Report. If the proposed work for the Soil Permit may impact a protected tree (as defined in the Tree Protection Bylaw 7671 or a tree inside a Streamside Protection or Natural Environment DPA) the DNV may require that revisions to the proposed work are made to avoid impacts to protected tree(s).

Q. I am building a new house. Are the Soil Permit requirements different?

- A. No, the requirements are the same. However, you can apply for a Soil Permit concurrently with your Demolition and / or Building Permit.

Q. What is a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan?

- A. A Sediment and Erosion Control Plan is a drawing that details the sediment and erosion control measures designed to minimize the negative impacts associated with the movement of soil and the process of excavation. These measures may include the following: covering exposed soil with plastic, installing a site access pad, utilizing a sediment trap / sump, installing a sediment filtration system. The DNV requires the installation of design specific catch basin inlet protection on all catch basins near a project or parcel with a Soil Permit. The District will provide an information sheet and suggested components of a sediment and erosion control plan at the Building Department, upon request.

More information on Sediment and Erosion Control can be found on the District's web site at <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?c=781>

Q. How long does the Soil Permit process take?

A. Process time varies depending on the completeness and accuracy of the reports and information received with the application and the overall complexity of the project. A stand-alone soil permit can be issued in 1 – 2 weeks. A complex soil permit project that involves building and / or tree permits and DPA's will take longer and can also depend on additional submission requirements identified during the soil permit review.

Q. How much does a Soil Permit cost?

A. The fees for a Soil Permit and related inspection fees are set out in the Fees and Charges Bylaw. Fees for soil permits on single family zoned lands are approximately half the cost of soil permits on industrial or commercial zoned lands.

Q. How many inspections are needed?

A. One scheduled inspection will occur during development. However, Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control and compliance with the Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw 6515 (Section 8 Suspended Solids) are expected to be followed at all times. The link to the Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw 6515 (Section 8) is here <http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/bylaws/6515.htm>

Q. What is the security deposit for and how is the amount determined?

A. If you require a Soil Permit, you will be required to provide a refundable Security Deposit which is in addition to the fee for the Permit. The Security Deposit depends on the cost of construction and the amount will be as follows:

Project Capital Cost	Required Security Deposit
0 - \$100,000	\$ 2,500
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$ 5,000
>\$200,000	\$10,000

Q. How do I get my security deposit back?

A. Once all the work has been completed, Environment staff will conduct a site inspection to determine if the work has been completed satisfactorily. The permit holder must call the DNV to request a Final inspection.

Q. Do I need a Soil Permit to proceed with my Building Permit application?

A. Smaller projects (e.g. interior renovations and small additions) not requiring a Soil Permit can apply directly for a Building Permit.

Q. When did Council adopt legislation requiring a Soil Permit?

A. Part C of the *Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw 6515* sets out regulations relating to soil removal and deposition. This Bylaw was first adopted in 1993, and subsequently amended several times, The Consolidated Bylaw is available at <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?c=74>

Q. What is a Site Profile? Will I need to provide one?

- A. A Site Profile is a disclosure form designed by the Province of BC to create an inventory of contaminated and potentially contaminated sites. Site Profiles are a requirement under BC's *Environmental Management Act*. The Site Profile form requires property owners to disclose whether certain types of land use activities that may contribute to soil or groundwater contamination have occurred on the parcel. The District has opted to participate in the collection and referral of Site Profiles to the province.

Complete information on the Site Profile process can be found at the Province of BC website here http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/remediation/site_profiles/

Q. Are there currently, or have there been in the past, underground storage or residential underground storage tanks (RUST) on the site?

- A. If you do not know, check with the District at 604-990-2311. You may be required to hire a suitably qualified contractor / consultant to remove an underground storage tank that is no longer in use and provide documentation of the removal to the DNV. You can find further information on the District's web site <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?a=4715>

Q. What should I do if the soil is contaminated? What should I do if the soil contains invasive species?

- A. You are required under Section 19 of the Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw 6515 to manage contaminated soils appropriately as outlined in the *Waste Management Act – Contaminated Site Regulation, Section 4*. Soils potentially containing invasive plants or insects should not be disposed of or moved without first referring to the current recommended removal methods for the species in question.