

Phenix City Construction Site Runoff Training at Auburn University's Stormwater Research Facility

Every year, the City of Phenix City invests in proper environmental protection training by sending representatives from the Engineering Department to training that is related to construction site stormwater runoff. This year, these representatives spent three days in May at Auburn University's Stormwater Research Facility (AUSRF) to learn about proper installation, implementation, maintenance, and inspection of best management practices (BMPs) that prevent sediment-contaminated runoff.



Image courtesy of AUSRF

A drop inlet protection demonstration at the AUSRF

The Stormwater Research Facility houses large-scale testing of actual BMPs that Phenix City inspectors see on construction sites in Phenix City. Many common types of BMPs are silt fences, erosion control blankets, curb inlet protection devices, rock construction exit pads, and many more. The researchers at AUSRF are well-versed in common mistakes that installers of these BMPs make and how to fix them. These researchers are highly trained to train inspectors and installers of these BMPs with many undergraduate and graduate students performing research on specific erosion and sediment control products during their time at the University.

These AUSRF researchers stressed the importance of erosion control over sediment control. Erosion is the process by which soils are detached from the ground. Sedimentation is the process by which those soil particles move from one location to another. The Phenix City inspectors learned that if erosion is prevented, sedimentation will also be prevented.

Another key takeaway from this training is that communication, planning, and using those two items together to perform erosion and sediment control work are necessary, but lesser talked about BMPs. The City has recently made steps to better communicate, plan, and perform erosion and sediment control work by implementing a Public Works Manual. This manual can help contractors, homebuilders, engineers, and many other people involved in development and re-development become better equipped for protecting the environment through proper planning, placement, installation, maintenance, and inspection of BMPs before, during, and after construction.

How can you help? If you see a construction site in Phenix City that does not appear to be properly maintained, reach out to the Qualified Credentialed Inspectors (QCIs) at the Phenix City Engineering Department! If you see any non-stormwater discharges or want to know more about the City's Stormwater Management Program, call the Engineering Department at 334-448-2760 or go to the Stormwater Management page on the City website.



Image courtesy of AUSRF

A rainfall simulator at the AUSRF with erosion control blanket demonstration