



Land Development News

Technical Bulletin

Subject: New County Soils Map

Date: August 29, 2011

No.: 11-07

Summary: A new County Soils Map and related amendments to the Problem Soils ordinance and Public Facilities Manual (PFM) have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Soil names have been updated to conform to national mapping standards and soil problem classes have been reformulated with these amendments. The new problem classes more closely resemble those employed in Loudoun and Prince William counties. One major difference is that disturbed soils, which are mapped only in Fairfax, have their own separate problem class. The *Description & Interpretive Guide to Soils* in Fairfax County has been updated to reflect this new information. The soil map, guide, and adopted amendments are available for viewing on the county's website through the links below:

County Soils Map:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gisapps/pdfViewer/>

Description & Interpretive Guide to Soils in Fairfax County;

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/soils_map_guide.pdf

Amendments to the Problem Soils ordinance and PFM:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/publications/pfm/soilsmap/>

Effective Date: The new County Soils Map and related amendments to the Problem Soils ordinance and PFM became effective at 12:01 a.m. on June 8, 2011. The new County Soils Map must be used for all plan submissions and building permit applications.

Background: The new County Soils Map is based on a soil survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) in collaboration with Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District.

The survey is certified to USDA National Cooperative Soil Survey standards and has been incorporated into the USDA's National Soil Information System database. The updated soil survey was published in its entirety (maps, descriptions, interpretations and tables) by NRCS in 2008 and is available on the USDA's Web Soil Survey website and Soil Data Mart website.

There is a significant increase in the amount and type of information available in the new soil survey about soils in the County. Because of the advances and refinements in soil science, certain soils are renamed and there are a few newly created names. The soil problem classes were reformulated in accordance with NRCS standards and applied to all soil types in the soil

survey. The new problem classes more closely resemble those employed in Loudoun and Prince William counties. One major difference is that disturbed soils, which are mapped only in Fairfax County, have their own separate problem class. The PFM includes a table summarizing geotechnical report submission requirements based on soil classes.

On June 7, 2011, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the new County Soils Map and related amendments to the County Code and the PFM. The amendments were necessary to align the County Code and PFM with the new soil survey and the new soil problem classes. The amendments include revisions to Chapter 107 (Problem Soils) of the County Code, and Chapters 4 (Geotechnical Guidelines), 6 (Storm Drainage), and 11 (Erosion and Sediment Control) of the PFM.

If you have any questions, please contact a Geotechnical Engineer with the Stormwater and Geotechnical Section, Site Development and Inspections Division, at **703-324-1720, TTY 711**.

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Land Development Services