

Electronic Site Inspection Guide for Operators

Last Reviewed: May 12, 2026

Construction Stormwater Inspections Overview

Construction stormwater inspections fall into two categories: operator site inspections and regulatory oversight inspections, each governed by different requirements.

Operator site inspections are required under Part 4 of the Utah Construction General Permit (CGP) and Part 3 of the Common Plan Permit (CPP). These require that a qualified person regularly inspects the site (typically once per week, or every 14 days and after a 0.5-inch or greater rainfall event) to ensure stormwater controls are properly installed, functioning, and maintained. These inspections are internal to the project team and are a condition of permit compliance.

In contrast, oversight inspections are conducted by the Utah Division of Water Quality (DWQ) or a regulated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) to evaluate whether a site is complying with its stormwater permit and developed Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Under Utah Code § 19-5-108.3, these oversight inspections must now be conducted electronically using photographs and documentation submitted by the operator. If an operator opts out, routine on-site inspections from the DWQ will continue.

Areas of the Site to Photograph

If you, the operator, choose to conduct electronic inspections in place of on-site inspections by DWQ, you are confirming your intent to submit all necessary documentation required for the DWQ to perform a remote electronic inspection. This includes providing geo-located, time-stamped photos of the active construction site that clearly captures:

1. Site signage showing the UPDES permit tracking number, main SWPPP contact's name, phone number and email address, and how to obtain a copy of the SWPPP (Ex: QR code that directs to the SWPPP documents).
2. All cleared, graded, or excavated areas that have not yet achieved final stabilization, as required by CGP Part 2.2.14 or CPP Part 2.6;
3. All storm water controls, including erosion, sediment, and pollution prevention BMPs installed per specifications to comply with the CGP or CPP;
4. All material, waste, borrow, and equipment storage and maintenance areas covered under your storm water permit;
5. All areas where storm water typically flows within the site, including natural or constructed drainage features used to divert, convey, or treat runoff;
6. All discharge points (outfalls) from the construction site; and
7. All areas where you have implemented stabilization measures, but final stabilization has not been completed.

Photograph Quality and Considerations

Photographs must be of sufficient resolution, clarity, and scope to allow the regulatory authority to assess compliance with Permit requirements. For best results, submit photos in their original format, ensuring they clearly capture site conditions and all areas where BMPs are installed. Images should offer full, clear views that accurately represent the extent and effectiveness of BMP installation and overall site conditions. Per Utah Code § 19-5-108.3(11)(b), electronic site inspection photos shall include meta data verifying the date, time, and GPS location corresponding to the construction site. If operator submitted photos do not meet this standard, the MS4 will have a documented reason for an on-site inspection.

Submission Deadline

This documentation must be submitted **within the first 7 calendar days of each month** following the first full month of active construction under permit coverage, and continue submitting inspections monthly thereafter. For example, if your permit coverage begins on March 15, your first full month of coverage is April. You must submit your first electronic inspection by May 7.

Failure to provide complete or clear documentation may result in a request to submit additional documentation or a decision by the DWQ or MS4 to conduct an on-site inspection.

Procedures for Conducting Electronic Site Inspections

It is essential that all sediment, erosion, and pollution prevention controls are installed in accordance with:

- The locations shown on the site map; and
- The materials and installation methods specified for each BMP in the SWPPP.

To support a complete and accurate oversight inspection, operators should provide photos that clearly show all key site conditions and stormwater controls. These photos must demonstrate compliance with the CGP or CPP. Follow this guide to ensure your photos meet inspection standards and reflect current site conditions:

- **Permit Signage**

Start with a photo of the site's stormwater permit sign, ensuring it includes all information required under CGP Part 1.5 (or CPP 1.9). The sign should be visibly posted in a safe and publicly accessible location near the primary site entrance. Ensure the photo clearly captures both the content of the sign and its placement.

- **Stormwater Controls (BMPs)**

Provide clear, geo-located photos of all BMPs. Capture multiple angles as needed to show installation and functionality per the BMP detail. For follow-up inspections, repeat photos from the same locations to show progress and maintenance.

Include photos of the following:

- **Unstabilized areas:**

- Cleared, graded, or excavated areas that have not yet reached final stabilization
- Areas where interim stabilization measures are in place (e.g., mulch, seed, erosion control blankets)

- **Erosion and sediment controls:**

- Wattles, silt fence, check dams, slope protection, sediment basins
 - Show perimeter controls approximately every 200–400 feet and especially at low points where runoff collects and/or leaves the project site
- Pollution prevention controls:
 - Spill kits, covered chemical storage, concrete/stucco washout stations, covered dumpsters, portable toilets (from multiple sides and with any tie-downs visible)
 - Fueling areas (show hoses, secondary containment, and/or berms)
- Stormwater flow paths and drainage features:
 - Natural or constructed swales, ditches, and curbs
 - Linear drainage features (e.g., curb lines) approximately every 400 feet
- Inlet protection:
 - Close-up of inlet protection devices and the area directly upstream
- Discharge points (outfalls):
 - Include views of erosion, sediment deposits, and any signs of discharge (e.g., color changes, oil sheen, solids)
- Exit/Track-out controls:
 - View of the full exit point from 90 degrees, showing effectiveness of stabilized construction entrance
- Staging and storage areas:
 - Show equipment/vehicle parking and material/waste storage (e.g., for concrete, asphalt, topsoil, gravel)
- Vehicles and equipment:
 - Document any leaks or signs of fluid drips, especially near maintenance areas
- **Photo Quality & Placement**
 - Photos must be clear, well-lit, and unaltered
 - Match photo locations to those on the site map
 - Provide context where needed (e.g., zoomed out to show surroundings, close-ups for key features)
 - Label photos clearly when submitting (e.g., “North Silt Fence – SE Corner,” “Concrete Washout – West Side”)

Justification for Conducting an Onsite Inspection

Pursuant to Utah Code § 19-5-108.3(11)(c) and (12), DWQ and MS4 may conduct an on-site oversight inspection if there is a documented justification, which may include:

1. The operator opted out of electronic inspections or requested an on-site inspection.
2. Submitted documentation is insufficient, including altered photos or missed

submittal deadlines.

3. Immediate or imminent threat to water quality exists.
4. An illicit discharge or complaint requires an investigation.
5. The site is within one-half mile of a river, stream, or lake.

Pursuant to the Small MS4 General UPDES Permit No. UTR090000, Section 4.2.4.4.5, the MS4 may complete an on-site inspection if the MS4 has a documented and justified reason. The circumstances that may be considered documented reasons include, but are not limited to:

1. Inadequate characterization in electronic site inspections of site conditions or portions of a site
2. Verified complaints
3. Operator has opted-out of electronic inspections
4. Any other evidence of noncompliance with Permit conditions that warrants an on-site inspection

Additional Documentation

Additionally, permitted sites must maintain an up-to-date SWPPP throughout the duration of the project and ensure it is accessible to DWQ inspectors during an oversight inspection. The SWPPP must include all required elements as outlined in CGP Part 7.3 or CPP Part 4.2, including site map(s), inspection reports, corrective action logs, a copy of the NOI, and other relevant documentation.

How to Submit

If you choose to provide electronic site inspections, please compile all required photographs into a single compressed archive file (e.g., *.zip) and submit it through DWQ's Electronic Document Submission Portal [[Link](#)] within the timeframe specified above.

For any questions and further assistance with submitting an electronic site inspection please contact the DWQ at WQInfoData@utah.gov or at (801) 536-4300.