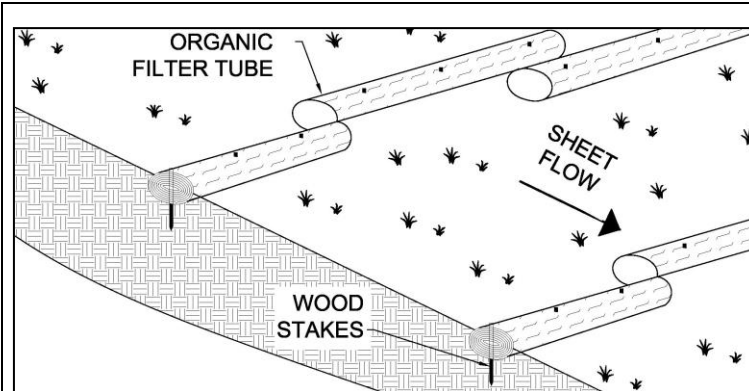


3.6 Organic Filter Tubes

Sediment Control



Description: Organic filter tubes are comprised of an open weave, mesh tube that is filled with a filter material (compost, wood chips, straw, coir, aspen fiber, or a mixture of materials). The tube may be constructed of geosynthetic material, plastic, or natural materials. Organic filter tubes are also called fiber rolls, fiber logs, wattles, mulch socks, and/or coir rolls. Filter tubes detain flow and capture sediment as linear controls along the contours of a slope or as a perimeter control down-slope of a disturbed area.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

DESIGN CRITERIA:

- Tube diameter when filled shall be specified on the plans
- 3 inch minimum embedment in soil
- 18 inch minimum overlap at ends of tubes
- Spacing based on drainage area and slope
- Must be staked on soil and secured with rockbags on pavement
- Turn ends of tube lines upslope a minimum of 10 feet

ADVANTAGES / BENEFITS:

- Effective means to treat sheet flow over a short distance
- Relatively easy to install
- May be used on steep slopes
- Can provide perimeter control on paved surfaces or where soil type prevents embedment of other controls
- Work well as perimeter controls around stockpiles

DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS:

- Difficult to remove when wet and/or filled with sediment
- Relatively small effective areas for sediment capture

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- Inspect regularly
- Repair eroded areas underneath the organic filter tubes
- Re-align and stake tubes that are dislodged by flow
- Remove sediment before it reaches half the height of the exposed tube

TARGETED POLLUTANTS

- Sediment
- Nutrients & Toxic Materials
- Oil & Grease
- Floatable Materials
- Other Construction Wastes

APPLICATIONS

| |
|-------------------|
| Perimeter Control |
| Slope Protection |
| Sediment Barrier |

- Channel Protection
- Temporary Stabilization
- Final Stabilization
- Waste Management
- Housekeeping Practices

Fe=0.50-0.75

(Depends on soil type)

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Capital Costs
- Maintenance
- Training
- Suitability for Slopes > 5%

Other Considerations:

- None

3.6.1 Primary Use

Organic filter tubes are long, flexible controls that are used along a line of constant elevation (along a contour) on slopes. They are used as perimeter controls down slope of disturbed areas, around temporary stockpiles and on side slopes where stormwater may runoff the area. The tubes maintain sheet flow, slow velocities, and capture sediment. When used in series on slopes, they also shorten the slope length and protect the slope from erosion.

3.6.2 Applications

Organic filter tubes include a wide variety of tube and filter materials. Organic filter tubes are used as a perimeter sediment barrier, similar to silt fence, for development projects and linear projects, such as roadways and utilities. They work well on individual residential lots and on lots being re-developed, where space may be limited. Organic filter tubes are most effective with coarse to silty soil types. Additional controls may be needed to remove fine silts and clay soils suspended in stormwater.

Organic filter tubes can be used on paved surfaces where it's not possible to stake a silt fence. Applications on paved surfaces include perimeter controls for soil stockpiles, pavement repair areas, utility trenching, and building demolition. When compost filter material is used in tubes on pavement, the material has the added benefit of removing some oil and grease from stormwater runoff.

Applications on slopes include temporary sediment control during construction and erosion control of the disturbed soil on the slope. Organic filter tubes may be used to control sheet flow on slopes when final stabilization measures are being applied and established.

Organic filter tubes may also be used for inlet protection and, in limited cases, as check dams in small drainage swales. Refer to [Section 3.4 Inlet Protection](#) and [Section 2.1 Check Dam](#) for the design criteria to use organic filter tubes in these applications.

3.6.3 Design Criteria

General Criteria

- Filter tubes should be installed along the contour.
- Tubes shall be staked with 2 inch by 2 inch wooden stakes at a maximum spacing of 4 feet. Rebar or similar metal stakes may be used instead of wooden stakes.
- When placed on pavement, sand or rock bags shall be placed abutting the down-slope side of the tubes to prevent runoff from dislodging the tubes. At a minimum, bags shall be placed one foot from each end of the tube and at the middle of the tube.
- Filter tubes shall be embedded a minimum of three inches when placed on soil. Placement on rock shall be designed as placement on pavement.
- The end of tubes shall overlap a minimum of 18 inches when multiple tubes are connected to form a linear control along a contour or a perimeter.
- Loose mulch material shall be placed against the log on the upstream side to facilitate contact with the ground.
- The last 10 feet (or more) at the ends of a line of tubes shall be turned upslope to prevent bypass by stormwater. Additional upslope lengths of tubes may be needed every 200 to 400 linear feet, depending on the traverse slope along the line of tubes.
- The most common sizes of tubes are 6 to 24 inches in diameter; however, tubes are available in sizes as small as 4 inches and up to 36 inches in diameter. The designer shall specify a diameter based on the site application. Tubes less than 8 inches in diameter when filled will require more frequent maintenance if used.

- Manufactured organic filter tube products shall have documentation of a minimum 75 percent soil retention using ASTM D7351 Standard Test Method for Determination of Sediment Retention Device Effectiveness in Sheet Flow Applications.
- When using manufactured tubes, the manufacturer's recommendations for diameter and spacing based on slope, flow velocities, and other site conditions shall be followed when they are more stringent than the design criteria in this section.
- When used as a perimeter control on grades of 10:1 or less, criteria in the following table shall be used as a guide for the size and installation rate of the organic filter tube.

Table 3.1 Perimeter Control Applications*

| <i>Drainage Area (Max)</i> | <i>Max Flow Length to the Tube</i> | <i>Tube Diameter (Min)</i> |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1/3 Acre per 100 feet | 145 feet | 18 inches |
| 1/4 Acre per 100 feet | 110 feet | 15 inches |
| 1/5 Acre per 100 feet | 85 feet | 12 inches |
| 1/8 Acre per 100 feet | 55 feet | 9 inches |

(Source: Modified and expanded from City of Plano Fact Sheet SP-13)

*Applicable on grades of 10:1 or flatter.

- When installing organic filter tubes along contours on slopes, criteria in the following table shall be used as a general guide for size and spacing of the tubes. Actual tube diameter and spacing shall be specified by the designer. The designer shall consider the tube manufacturers recommendations, the soil type, flow volume on the slope, required performance life, and erosion control measures that may be used in conjunction with the tubes.

Table 3.2 Maximum Spacing for Slope Protection

| <i>Slope (H:V)</i> | <i>Tube Diameter (Min)</i> | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | <i>9 Inches</i> | <i>12 Inches</i> | <i>18 Inches</i> | <i>24 Inches</i> |
| 5:1 to 10:1 | 35 feet | 40 feet | 55 feet | 60 feet |
| 4:1 | 30 feet | 40 feet | 50 feet | 50 feet |
| 3:1 | 25 feet | 35 feet | 40 feet | 40 feet |
| 2:1 | 20 feet | 25 feet | 30 feet | 30 feet |
| 1:1 | 10 feet | 15 feet | 20 feet | 20 feet |

(Source: Modified and expanded from Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications Standards for Filter Socks)

Tube Material

- The designer shall specify the type of mesh based on the required life of the tube. At a minimum, the mesh shall have a rated life of one year under field conditions.
- If the tubes will be left onsite as part of the final stabilization, they must be constructed of 100 percent biodegradable jute, coir, sisal or similar natural fiber or 100 percent UV photodegradable plastic, polyester or geosynthetic material.
- Mesh tubes may be oval or round in cross-section.
- Mesh for the tubes shall be open and evenly woven. Size of weave openings shall be specified based on filter material. Openings may range from ½ inch for Erosion Control Compost to 2 inches for straw and coir.
- Mesh openings should not exceed ½ inch in diameter.

Filter Material

- Different filter materials have different properties and will affect sheet flow differently. The designer shall specify the type of material to be used (or excluded) on a particular site.
- Straw filter material shall be Certified Weed Free Forage. The straw must be in good condition, air-dried, and not rotten or moldy.
- Compost shall conform to the requirements for Erosion Control Compost in Item 161 of the Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges (TxDOT 2004).
- Compost may provide some oil and grease removal; however, the large percentage of fines in compost will result in less filtering and more ponding of stormwater.
- Wood chips shall be 100 percent untreated chips and free of inorganic debris, such as plastic, glass, metal, etc. Wood chip size shall not be smaller than 1 inch and shall not exceed 3 inches in diameter. Shavings shall not be more than 5% of the total mass.

3.6.4 Design Guidance and Specifications

Specifications for Erosion Control Compost to be used as filter material may be found in Item 161 of the Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges (TxDOT 2004).

3.6.5 Inspection and Maintenance Requirements

Organic filter tubes should be inspected regularly (at least as often as required by the TPDES Construction General Permit). The filter tube should be checked to ensure that it is in continuous contact with the soil at the bottom of the embedment trench. Closely check for rill erosion that may develop under the filter tubes. Eroded spots must be repaired and monitored to prevent reoccurrence. If erosion under the tube continues, additional controls are needed.

Staking shall be checked to ensure that the filter tubes are not moving due to stormwater runoff. Repair and re-stake slumping filter tubes. Tubes that are split, torn or unraveling shall be repaired or replaced.

Check the filter tube material to make sure that it has not become clogged with sediment or debris. Clogged filter tubes usually lead to standing water behind the filter tube after the rain event. Sediment shall be removed from behind the filter tube before it reaches half the height of the exposed portion of the tube.

When sediment control is no longer needed on the site, the tubes may be split open and the filter material may be used for mulching during establishment of vegetation for final stabilization if it meets the criteria in [Section 2.5 Mulching](#).

3.6.6 Example Schematics

The following schematics are example applications of the construction control. They are intended to assist in understanding the control's design and function.

The schematics are **not for construction**. They may serve as a starting point for creating a construction detail, but they must be site adapted by the designer. In addition, dimensions and notes appropriate for the application must be added by the designer.

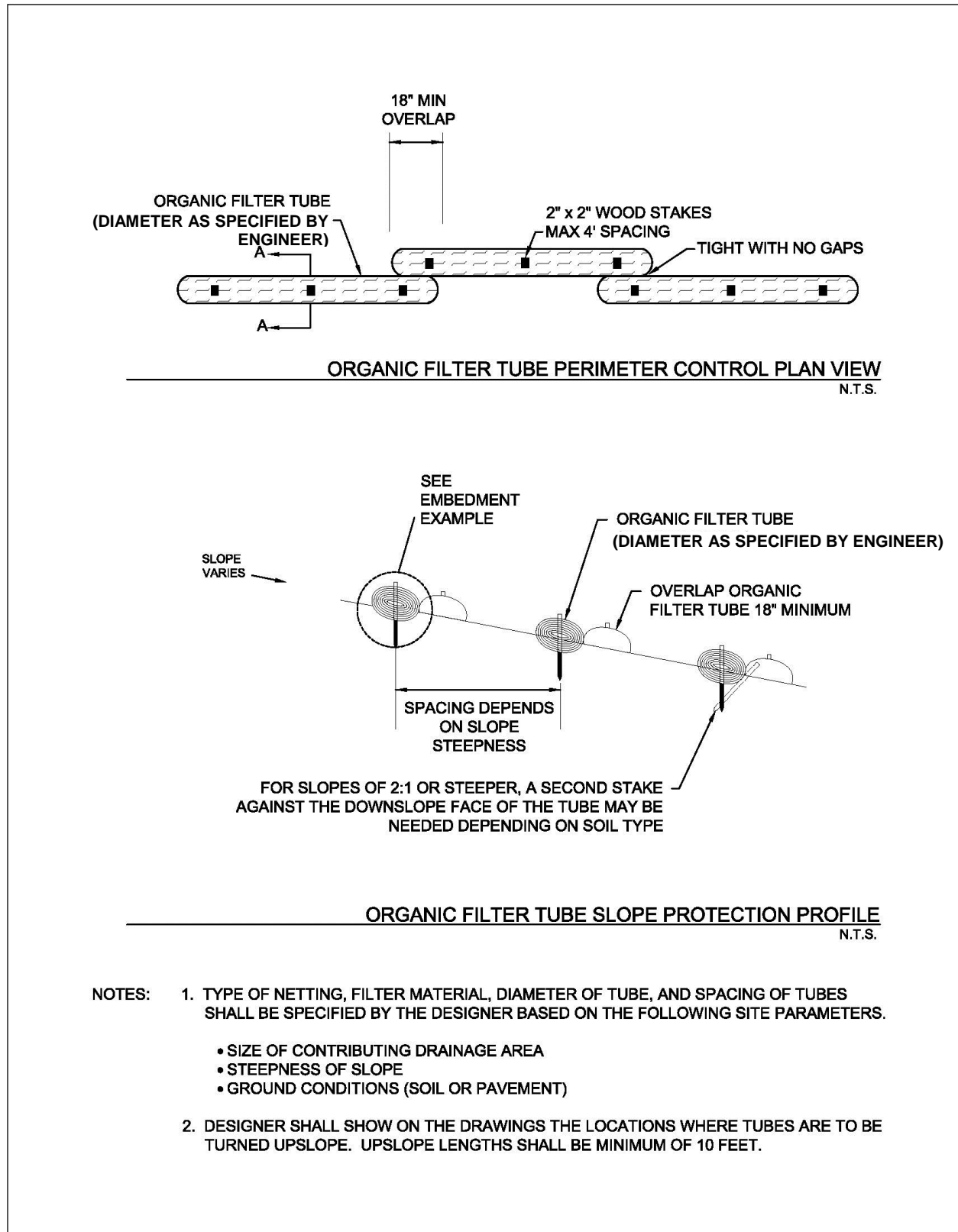


Figure 3.15 Schematics of Organic Filter Tubes

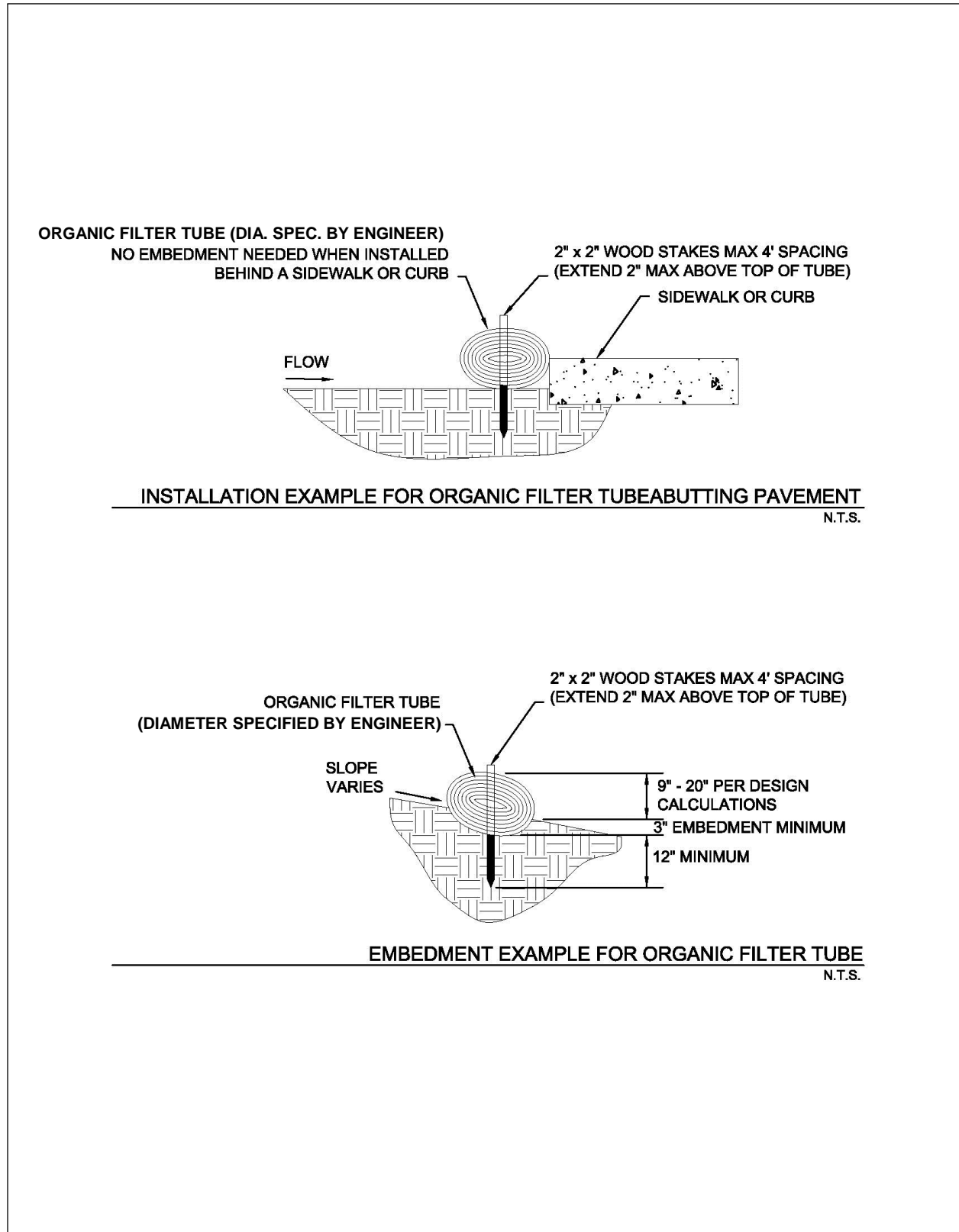


Figure 3.16 Examples of Organic Filter Tube Installation Methods