

ARLINGTON COUNTY LAND DISTURBANCE GUIDELINES

FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, RE-DEVELOPMENT, or ADDITIONS
February 25, 2004

Please note this guidance is not comprehensive, and additional items may be appropriate based on the project type and scope.

The "Plan of Development Process" requirements in Section 61-13 of the Arlington County Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance apply to all development projects in Arlington County that propose to disturb more than 2,500 square feet (SF) of land, including demolition and clearing and grading projects. In cases where it is not obvious that less than 2,500 SF of land disturbance will occur, the county may require the applicant to demonstrate that the disturbance is under 2,500 SF or comply with the Ordinance criteria for the "Plan of Development Process." The following guidance is provided in response to the large amount of development applications for which the amount of land to be "disturbed" with the proposed development needs to be demonstrated clearly to Arlington County. More guidance on this subject is available in the "Arlington County Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance Interim Guidance Manual, Version 2.0, August 2003."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How can I quickly estimate my total "disturbed area?"

- As a rule of thumb, any total new building footprint area of 1,000 SF or greater will usually indicate a land disturbance of greater than 2,500 SF.
- It is safe to assume a minimum of approximately two times the amount of new building footprint for total disturbance. This assumption is based on required area required for clearing, grading, access, and footing construction, on the premise of **normal and customary construction practices**. Calculation Example: If bldg footprint is 500 SF, disturbed area is approximately 1000 SF.

What activities are considered "land disturbance?" (Please note this is not a comprehensive list, but items that should be included at a minimum):

- Clearing and grading
- Demolition of existing structures
- New houses, buildings, additions, expansions, garages or any other new building footprint added to the site
- Accessway for construction equipment (backhoe, bobcat, wheelbarrows, etc.)
- Area for dumpster
- Set-down areas for construction materials (roof trusses, pre-fabricated materials, etc.)
- Grading for drainage – Per the 2000 International Residential Code (IRC) R401.3, the ground must have 6" of fall within the first 10 feet from the foundation or must include drains or swales to ensure proper drainage away from structure.
- Grading/excavation for construction of building footing
- Stockpile or spoil areas
- New concrete/paved areas including driveways - also include area for frame-up if required.
- New sidewalks, paths, or stairs
- Landscaping areas

I believe my land disturbance is less than 2,500 SF. How can I best demonstrate the "disturbed area" on my site to the County?

- Regardless of the size of the disturbance, the best way to demonstrate the total limits of disturbance for a project is to provide a plat, plan, or other drawing of the site (to scale) that shows any "land disturbing" activities associated with the project per the list above. The drawing should show a "limits of disturbance" line and include a calculated total "area of land disturbance."

What if my land disturbance is demonstrated to be close to 2,500 SF?

- Please be advised that Arlington County may request that the limits of disturbance be staked out on-site, and metes and bounds be submitted to ensure that no lines are off. A licensed Land Surveyor should produce a metes and bounds and a plat showing the calculated area of disturbance. During construction, the contractor cannot spill soil or work outside of the lines.