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DATE: March 2, 2020

TO: All Architects, Builders, Contractors, Developers, Engineers, Surveyors, and Property Owners

FROM: Greg Emanuel, Director, Department of Environmental Services (DES)

SUBJECT: High Failure Rates for Level I and Level II Infiltration Systems for Land Disturbing Activities Regulated under Arlington County Code Chapter 60 (Stormwater Management Ordinance)

Infiltration-only systems installed to date under Chapter 60 have experienced high failure rates. These failures have placed burdens on builders and property owners, including inability to obtain certificates of occupancy, unanticipated added costs at the end of construction, and subsequent costs and disruption for property owners following construction.

Failure of these infiltration systems to meet minimum percolation rates and pass inspection at the end of construction requires submission of a revised stormwater management plan to meet the Ordinance's compliance requirements. No certificate of occupancy will be issued until the revised plan is approved and the new stormwater management facilities constructed and approved.

Construction of stormwater management facilities required under a revised plan after a project is otherwise completed can present substantial engineering and siting challenges as well as add unanticipated time and costs.

Most builders and design professionals do not choose infiltration as a compliance tool because of the degree of associated risk and uncertainty. You are strongly encouraged to consider these risks and potential consequences for you and your clients in choosing infiltration as a primary compliance tool for your project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Emanuel".

Greg Emanuel, Director
Department of Environmental Services