The purpose of a silt fence is to act as a temporary containment structure while construction activities occur, slowing the velocity of runoff and causing sediment deposition at the structure. Silt fences aid in filtering sediment from runoff but do not filter small, suspended particles in runoff waters.

**Maintenance of Silt Barriers**

1. Inspect silt fences after every rain.
2. Repair any damage immediately.
3. Remove sediment from the upstream side of the barrier when one-half full or when sediment accumulates to the extent that a visible bulge develops in the silt fence.
4. Replace filter fabric when deteriorated.
5. Design life of a synthetic silt fence is approximately 6 months.
6. Maintain until the project is vegetated or otherwise stabilized.
7. Remove barriers and accumulated sediment when the project is stabilized.
**When do you use Silt Fences?**

- Before construction activities begin
- While construction activities are occurring

**Where do you use Silt Fences?**

- At the toe of cut and fill slopes
- As small check structures
- As small sediment containment systems
- As diversion structures
- Around inlets
- To protect water bodies

**When do you NOT use Silt Fences?**

- Where concentrated flows are expected
- After construction activities are completed

**When do you inspect Silt Fences?**

- Inspect at the end of each work day or after each rain. Repair, clean or replace as necessary. Or follow the inspection schedule on the approved site plans.

**What do you look for when you inspect Silt Fences?**

- Is the fabric secured in the ground?
- Is the fabric attached to posts?
- Are stakes on the downstream side?

If you can answer “yes” to any of the following questions, repair or replace the barriers.

1. Has wind destroyed the fence?
2. Has water “flattened” the structure?
3. Is the fabric torn?
4. Will water flow around the fence?