

Description

Check dams are temporary grade control structures placed in drainage channels to limit the erosivity of stormwater by reducing flow velocity. Check dams are typically constructed from rock, gravel bags, sand bags, or sometimes, proprietary devices. Reinforced check dams are typically constructed from rock and wire gabion. Although the primary function of check dams is to reduce the velocity of concentrated flows, a secondary benefit is sediment trapping upstream of the structure.



Photograph CD-1. Rock check dams in a roadside ditch. Photo courtesy of WWE.

Appropriate Uses

Use as a grade control for temporary drainage ditches or swales until final soil stabilization measures are established upstream and downstream. Check dams can be used on mild or moderately steep slopes. Check dams may be used under the following conditions:

- As temporary grade control facilities along waterways until final stabilization is established.
- Along permanent swales that need protection prior to installation of a non-erodible lining.
- Along temporary channels, ditches or swales that need protection where construction of a non-erodible lining is not practicable.
- Reinforced check dams should be used in areas subject to high flow velocities.

Design and Installation

Place check dams at regularly spaced intervals along the drainage swale or ditch. Check dams heights should allow for pools to develop upstream of each check dam, extending to the downstream toe of the check dam immediately upstream.

When rock is used for the check dam, place rock mechanically or by hand. Do not dump rocks into the drainage channel. Where multiple check dams are used, the top of the lower dam should be at the same elevation as the toe of the upper dam.

When reinforced check dams are used, install erosion control fabric under and around the check dam to prevent erosion on the upstream and downstream sides. Each section of the dam should be keyed in to reduce the potential for washout or undermining. A rock apron upstream and downstream of the dam may be necessary to further control erosion.

Check Dams	
Functions	
Erosion Control	Yes
Sediment Control	Moderate
Site/Material Management	No

Design details with notes are provided for the following types of check dams:

- Rock Check Dams (CD-1)
- Reinforced Check Dams (CD-2)

Sediment control logs may also be used as check dams; however, silt fence is not appropriate for use as a check dam. Many jurisdictions also prohibit or discourage use of straw bales for this purpose.

Maintenance and Removal

Replace missing rocks causing voids in the check dam. If gravel bags or sandbags are used, replace or repair torn or displaced bags.

Remove accumulated sediment, as needed to maintain BMP effectiveness, typically before the sediment depth upstream of the check dam is within ½ of the crest height. Remove accumulated sediment prior to mulching, seeding, or chemical soil stabilization. Removed sediment can be incorporated into the earthwork with approval from the Project Engineer, or disposed of at an alternate location in accordance with the standard specifications.

Check dams constructed in permanent swales should be removed when perennial grasses have become established, or immediately prior to installation of a non-erodible lining. All of the rock and accumulated sediment should be removed, and the area seeded and mulched, or otherwise stabilized.

CHECK DAM INSTALLATION NOTES

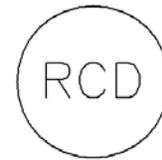
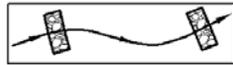
1. SEE PLAN VIEW FOR:
 - LOCATION OF CHECK DAMS.
 - CHECK DAM TYPE (CHECK DAM OR REINFORCED CHECK DAM).
 - LENGTH (L), CREST LENGTH (CL), AND DEPTH (D).
2. CHECK DAMS INDICATED ON INITIAL SWMP SHALL BE INSTALLED AFTER CONSTRUCTION FENCE, BUT PRIOR TO ANY UPSTREAM LAND DISTURBING ACTIVITIES.
3. RIPRAP UTILIZED FOR CHECK DAMS SHOULD BE OF APPROPRIATE SIZE FOR THE APPLICATION. TYPICAL TYPES OF RIPRAP USED FOR CHECK DAMS ARE TYPE M (D50 12") OR TYPE L (D50 9").
4. RIPRAP PAD SHALL BE TRENCHED INTO THE GROUND A MINIMUM OF 1'.
5. THE ENDS OF THE CHECK DAM SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 1' 6" HIGHER THAN THE CENTER OF THE CHECK DAM.

CHECK DAM MAINTENANCE NOTES

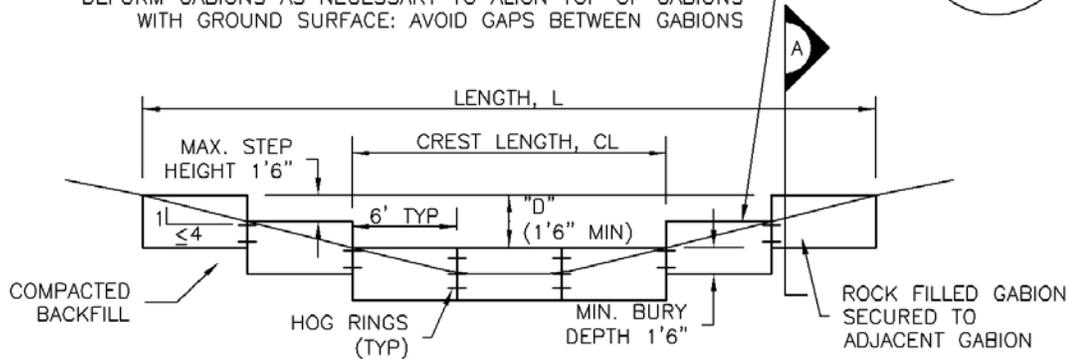
1. INSPECT BMPs EACH WORKDAY, AND MAINTAIN THEM IN EFFECTIVE OPERATING CONDITION. MAINTENANCE OF BMPs SHOULD BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE. INSPECT BMPs AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (AND ALWAYS WITHIN 24 HOURS) FOLLOWING A STORM THAT CAUSES SURFACE EROSION, AND PERFORM NECESSARY MAINTENANCE.
2. FREQUENT OBSERVATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ARE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN BMPs IN EFFECTIVE OPERATING CONDITION. INSPECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED THOROUGHLY.
3. WHERE BMPs HAVE FAILED, REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT SHOULD BE INITIATED UPON DISCOVERY OF THE FAILURE.
4. SEDIMENT ACCUMULATED UPSTREAM OF THE CHECK DAMS SHALL BE REMOVED WHEN THE SEDIMENT DEPTH IS WITHIN ½ OF THE HEIGHT OF THE CREST.
5. CHECK DAMS ARE TO REMAIN IN PLACE UNTIL THE UPSTREAM DISTURBED AREA IS STABILIZED AND APPROVED BY THE LOCAL JURISDICTION.
6. WHEN CHECK DAMS ARE REMOVED, EXCAVATIONS SHALL BE FILLED WITH SUITABLE COMPACTED BACKFILL. DISTURBED AREA SHALL BE SEEDED AND MULCHED AND COVERED WITH GEOTEXTILE OR OTHERWISE STABILIZED IN A MANNER APPROVED BY THE LOCAL JURISDICTION.

(DETAILS ADAPTED FROM DOUGLAS COUNTY, COLORADO, NOT AVAILABLE IN AUTOCAD)

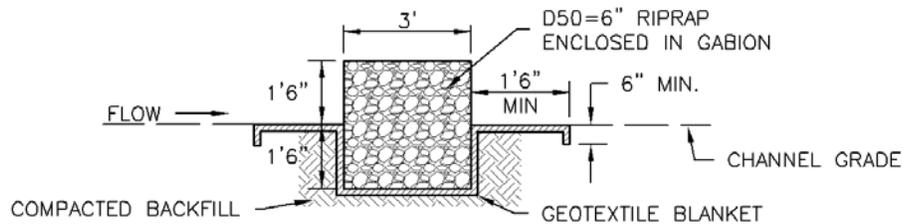
NOTE: MANY JURISDICTIONS HAVE BMP DETAILS THAT VARY FROM UDFCD STANDARD DETAILS. CONSULT WITH LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AS TO WHICH DETAIL SHOULD BE USED WHEN DIFFERENCES ARE NOTED.



ALTERNATIVE TO STEPS ON BANKS ABOVE CREST:
DEFORM GABIONS AS NECESSARY TO ALIGN TOP OF GABIONS
WITH GROUND SURFACE: AVOID GAPS BETWEEN GABIONS



REINFORCED CHECK DAM ELEVATION VIEW



SECTION A

REINFORCED CHECK DAM INSTALLATION NOTES

1. SEE PLAN VIEW FOR:
 - LOCATIONS OF CHECK DAMS.
 - CHECK DAM TYPE (CHECK DAM OR REINFORCED CHECK DAM).
 - LENGTH (L), CREST LENGTH (CL), AND DEPTH (D).
2. CHECK DAMS INDICATED ON THE SWMP SHALL BE INSTALLED PRIOR TO AN UPSTREAM LAND-DISTURBING ACTIVITIES.
3. REINFORCED CHECK DAMS, GABIONS SHALL HAVE GALVANIZED TWISTED WIRE NETTING WITH A MAXIMUM OPENING DIMENSION OF 4½" AND A MINIMUM WIRE THICKNESS OF 0.10". WIRE "HOG RINGS" AT 4" SPACING OR OTHER APPROVED MEANS SHALL BE USED AT ALL GABION SEAMS AND TO SECURE THE GABION TO THE ADJACENT SECTION.
4. THE CHECK DAM SHALL BE TRENCHED INTO THE GROUND A MINIMUM OF 1' 6".
5. GEOTEXTILE BLANKET SHALL BE PLACED IN THE REINFORCED CHECK DAM TRENCH EXTENDING A MINIMUM OF 1' 6" ON BOTH THE UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM SIDES OF THE REINFORCED CHECK DAM.

CD-2. REINFORCED CHECK DAM

REINFORCED CHECK DAM MAINTENANCE NOTES

1. INSPECT BMPs EACH WORKDAY, AND MAINTAIN THEM IN EFFECTIVE OPERATING CONDITION. MAINTENANCE OF BMPs SHOULD BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE. INSPECT BMPs AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (AND ALWAYS WITHIN 24 HOURS) FOLLOWING A STORM THAT CAUSES SURFACE EROSION, AND PERFORM NECESSARY MAINTENANCE.
2. FREQUENT OBSERVATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ARE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN BMPs IN EFFECTIVE OPERATING CONDITION. INSPECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED THOROUGHLY.
3. WHERE BMPs HAVE FAILED, REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT SHOULD BE INITIATED UPON DISCOVERY OF THE FAILURE.
4. SEDIMENT ACCUMULATED UPSTREAM OF REINFORCED CHECK DAMS SHALL BE REMOVED AS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BMP, TYPICALLY WHEN THE UPSTREAM SEDIMENT DEPTH IS WITHIN ½ THE HEIGHT OF THE CREST.
5. REPAIR OR REPLACE REINFORCED CHECK DAMS WHEN THERE ARE SIGNS OF DAMAGE SUCH AS HOLES IN THE GABION OR UNDERCUTTING.
6. REINFORCED CHECK DAMS ARE TO REMAIN IN PLACE UNTIL THE UPSTREAM DISTURBED AREA IS STABILIZED AND APPROVED BY THE LOCAL JURISDICTION.
7. WHEN REINFORCED CHECK DAMS ARE REMOVED, ALL DISTURBED AREAS SHALL BE COVERED WITH TOPSOIL, SEEDED AND MULCHED, AND COVERED WITH A GEOTEXTILE BLANKET, OR OTHERWISE STABILIZED AS APPROVED BY LOCAL JURISDICTION.

(DETAIL ADAPTED FROM DOUGLAS COUNTY, COLORADO AND CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO, NOT AVAILABLE IN AUTOCAD)

NOTE: MANY JURISDICTIONS HAVE BMP DETAILS THAT VARY FROM UDFCD STANDARD DETAILS. CONSULT WITH LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AS TO WHICH DETAIL SHOULD BE USED WHEN DIFFERENCES ARE NOTED.