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## **KDOT takes steps to protect water resources during projects**

Kansas Department of Transportation construction staff and private contractors who work on state road projects are now required to complete a class on how to prevent storm water runoff pollution.

The class is one of several remedial actions KDOT has agreed to in response to action by the Environmental Protection Agency, which found the state in violation of the Clean Water Act. A civil action against KDOT was filed Monday.

As part of the settlement with EPA, the state will:

- Pay a fine of \$477,500;
- Implement a third-party inspection program to assure compliance with the law;
- Prepare an annual report summarizing all actions taken to improve statewide compliance and all potential National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit violations;
- Prepare a quarterly newsletter addressing storm water management issues;
- Assign designated personnel for each project to enforce storm water compliance;
- Hire a storm water compliance manager to oversee the program;
- Assure that contractors have trained personnel to manage their work and to implement appropriate measures to minimize and control sediment and other pollutants on KDOT projects.

The EPA action stems from violations on three expansion projects – U.S. 69 in Miami County five years ago, U.S. 59 in Douglas County three years ago; and the current K-18 in Manhattan.

While the alleged environmental damage wasn't quantified, EPA guidelines, including NPDES permit requirements, weren't followed. The settlement with EPA must be approved by the Kansas federal district court after the opportunity for public comment.

“For many years now, all KDOT construction projects have included components that satisfy the federal and state erosion control requirements. Despite having those controls already in place, three recent projects were found to have violations,” Deputy Secretary and State Transportation Engineer Jerry Younger said.

“Moving forward, additional procedures are being put in place and greater emphasis and accountability will be placed on KDOT staff and our contractor partners to comply with the Clean Water Act.”

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