

Paving Residential Dirt Driveways in Placer County

(Revised July 2007)

Contact information

Caltrans Encroachment Permits: (530) 741-4403

Placer County Department of Engineering and Survey: (530) 581-6227

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency: (775) 588-4547

Tahoe Resource Conservation District: (530) 543-1501

Considerations for all new driveway installations:

Bare soil areas serving as driveways are usually so compacted that water cannot readily soak into the ground. Stormwater can flow from the compacted area and carry sediments off the property and eventually into the lake. Vehicle tires and snow removal equipment can also carry sediment from unpaved driveways into the street. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Code of Ordinances Chapter 25.5.E states "All roads, driveways and parking areas proposed for year-round use shall be paved." Soil erosion and stormwater runoff can be controlled with a properly designed paved driveway and infiltration system.

A system to capture and infiltrate storm water runoff from your driveway must be installed at the time of paving to bring your property into compliance with the TRPA Ordinance (see **Runoff Infiltration Requirements** below).

Paving your driveway is a requirement unless your neighborhood is deemed "summer use only" and is never plowed in the winter. You will still be responsible for stabilizing your driveway surface. Contact the TRPA to determine if your property meets these criteria.

It is always advisable to document existing conditions before making any changes to your property to avoid over-coverage penalties or loss of rights to existing coverage. See excerpt of Chapter 2 of the TRPA's Code of Ordinances below. Common forms of documentation include photographs, site assessments, TRPA stamped plans, etc. For more information on land capability/land coverage, visit **www.trpa.org**.

Permitting process:

- Contact the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) for a paving permit. A BMP evaluation of the property is required for the permit to be issued. The application fee for the permit will be waived if the homeowner elects to install all other BMPs at the time of paving (not just the driveway BMPs).
- Contact the Placer County Department of Engineering and Surveying for an encroachment permit to pave the portion of your driveway located within the public right-of-way. Contact Caltrans if the property is accessed via a State Highway.

Option 1. Paving the minimum of two parking spaces within the property boundary

In most cases the TRPA will grant a paving permit to meet the minimum requirements even if it results in an over-coverage situation for your property. This is usually two off-street parking spaces (approximately 400 square feet). Other previously parked on compacted bare soil areas that are not paved need to be blocked off and/or restored to natural conditions.

Option 2. Paving more than the minimum of two parking spaces

Paving areas of undisturbed native vegetation or soils is not part of the BMP Retrofit program, is detrimental to water quality and may result in a property being over-covered. Paving more than the minimum will probably require a site assessment. To avoid potential future over-coverage penalties or loss of rights to existing coverage contact the TRPA for more information. Larger driveway installations that involve the grading of more than 3 cubic yards of soil or more than 200 sq ft of area may require a grading permit, which has more requirements than standard paving permits (Option 1).

Runoff Infiltration Requirements

Pursuant to subsection 25.5.A of the TRPA Code of Ordinances, all property owners in the Tahoe Basin are required to install infiltration facilities (BMPs) designed to accommodate the volume of runoff from a twenty year/one hour storm, which is approximately one inch of precipitation in an hour. To determine the size of an infiltration system, the area of the impervious surface and the permeability of the soil are used to calculate the minimum dimensions needed for a particular kind of system. It is usually more economical and efficient to integrate driveway runoff infiltration systems into the design of a new driveway rather than retrofit it at a later date. Some design considerations include:

- Grading - designs that direct runoff to the side of the driveway, where it is easier and more economical to install an infiltration system, rather than to the street.
- Capture and Conveyance - driveways that drain towards the street must have a capture and conveyance system installed such as a swale or slotted trench drain to direct driveway runoff to an appropriately sized infiltration system.
- Maintenance – systems that are easy to inspect and keep clean are highly recommended. These include sediment traps, removable grates on trench drains, filter fabric lined infiltration systems and open systems.
- Safety –systems that will eliminate ponding and subsequent ice patches on your driveway.

The Tahoe Resource Conservation District provides homeowners with assistance to design runoff infiltration systems for their driveways and other impervious surfaces. For more information, visit www.tahoercd.org.

Contractors

- A list of licensed contractors who have attended the most recent BMP Contractors Workshop can be obtained at <http://www.tahoebmp.org>. This is a list of attendees for informative purposes only. The TRCD cannot verify the qualifications of or recommend any of the individuals on this list.
- If you hire a paving contractor you should discuss who will be responsible for obtaining applicable permits and ensure that appropriate driveway BMPs are installed at the time of paving.

Alternative Driveway Materials

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency requires a driveway paving material that produces a hard, plowable surface. For information on alternative paving materials that meet this requirement contact the TRPA.

TRPA's definition of Land Coverage as defined in Chapter 2, *Definitions*, of TRPA's Code of Ordinances is as follows:

Land Coverage: 1) A man-made structure, improvement or covering, either created before February 10, 1972 or created after February 10, 1972 pursuant to either TRPA Ordinance No. 4, as amended, or other TRPA approval, that prevents normal precipitation from directly reaching the surface of the land underlying the structure, improvement or covering. Such structures, improvements and coverings include but are not limited to roofs, decks, surfaces that are paved with asphalt, concrete or stone, roads, streets, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts, patios; and 2) lands so used before February 10, 1972, for such uses as for the parking of cars and heavy and repeated pedestrian traffic that the soil is compacted so as to prevent substantial infiltration. A structure, improvement or covering shall not be considered as land coverage if it permits at least 75 percent of normal precipitation directly to reach the ground and permits growth of vegetation on the approved species list. Common terms related to land coverage are:

- 1) Hard Coverage--man-made structures as defined above.*
- 2) Soft Coverage--compacted areas without structures as defined above.*