

MULCHING

WHAT IS THIS?

Mulching can be a cost-effective temporary way of protecting soil from water and dust erosion on a development site, as well as being part of landscaping or revegetation at the end. Mulching involves spreading dry, heavy plant material over disturbed ground to prevent erosion from rain or wind. If vegetation has to be cleared for the development, where appropriate, non-weed plants can be converted to mulch via chipping or shredding. Mulch can assist seedling growth by reducing moisture loss from the soil and suppressing weed growth.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Before starting site works:

- Include all areas to be mulched in your approved ESCP (see page 17).
- Keep as much existing vegetation cover on your site as possible and only remove vegetation to be mulched immediately prior to earthworks.
- If importing mulch, use only certified weed free mulch and check with a revegetation specialist to ensure use of mulch is suitable for the site and intended use.
- Process appropriate non-weedy vegetation removed during site preparation for mulch.
- Avoid putting mulch on steep slopes (unless secured) or in drainage lines or overland flow paths - displaced mulch can block your controls and become pollution.
- Install diversion drains or berms above batters to protect mulch from runoff.
- Include function and maintenance schedules for mulch in all site inductions.



Installing the control:

- Spread sufficient mulch to fully cover the surface of the soil, not less than 75mm thick.
- Avoid contamination with unwanted materials and weeds.
- Ensure the application surface is free of deep wheel tracks or ruts which may promote flow concentration down the slope and dislodge mulch (see page 34).
- DO NOT place mulch in drainage channels.
- DO NOT place mulch directly onto dispersive soil (see page 36).
- Ensure mulch use is consistent with bushfire hazard requirements for the site.

Maintaining the control:

Inspect mulched areas after rain and after strong winds. If mulch has been displaced, replace to maintain coverage, secure, and install additional drainage controls to prevent future displacement of mulch.

It is not a myth - mulch stockpiles can catch on fire if not appropriately managed.

Do not stockpile mulch higher than 2m to reduce fire risk.

