

Options for Marshall Fire affected vacant lots to establish vegetation



The City of Louisville vacant lots that are not being rebuilt by May 1, 2024, need to comply with storm water and vacant lot requirements. This includes establishing 80% vegetation on the lot. If the lot does not have 80% coverage of vegetation, erosion control barriers must be installed.

Property owners have two recommended options to establish vegetation:

1. Hydroseeding. Property owners may hire a landscape contractor to hydroseed the lot. Hydroseeding is a planting process that uses a slurry of seed and mulch. The mulch and tackifiers commonly used in hydroseeding slurries help keep seeds in place while they establish, and as the root systems of the establishing seeds grows, they then contribute to the soil stabilization. (Hydroseeding may be more cost effective but may be required to be applied more frequently to establish 80% vegetative cover.)

2. Manual Seeding with seeding blanket or straw blanket applied. Property owners may choose to manually seed or hire a landscape contractor to manually seed or seed staple.

Our City of Louisville Natural Resource Team recommends the following manual seeding process to encourage best vegetative growth:

Prepare the seedbed by roughening the surface with a rake in order to create furrows approximately 1/8 - 1/4 inch deep. Many seeds are hairy and are easiest to hand broadcast rather than using a typical lawn seeder. Hand broadcast half of the seed while walking in one direction (e.g. north to south) and the other half in a perpendicular direction (e.g. east to west). After hand broadcasting, rake the area again using the flat side of the rake, and gently compact the soil using a lawn roller or similar device. Light compaction will greatly improve germination by providing seed-to-soil contact and improved moisture absorption. Covering the area with straw or seeding blanket is required for moisture retention and protection from animals.

Erosion control must be placed over the seeded area and any lot that does not have vegetation coverage of 80%. Erosion controls are straw wattles or silt fence staked around the perimeter of the lot to prevent sediment from washing into the stormwater system. Erosion controls must be maintained 100% of the time.

Please contact City of Louisville's Community Service Officer Nancy Hodges for additional resource list and for any further questions at 720-355-5041 or nhodges@louisvilleco.gov.