



Importance of Topsoil

Topsoil is the most fertile portion of soil and the most valuable. It requires 500 years under natural conditions to produce an inch of topsoil.

Home builders can take advantage of this valuable resource by stockpiling topsoil on the development site and reapplying it after construction has stopped. Seeding will then produce a beautiful green expanse while rapidly stabilizing the site.

A Study by the Geauga SWCD shows that homebuyers will pay 4% more for a grass covered lot versus a bare soil lot. This can equate to a 150% profit on the cost of vegetation installation.

Topsoil is a perfect blend of structural media and nutrient material. Topsoil's natural fertility promotes greener, thicker, healthier grass and reduces the amount of amendments, and organic material required to establish landscape plantings. Conventional seeding methods can be utilized, reducing the need for costly hydro-seeding or sodding.

Topsoil may eliminate the need for soil amendments as required in the Rainwater and Land Development manual from Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water.

Tips For Stockpiling Topsoil

- Locate the stockpile away from construction areas such as at the rear of the property or on proposed common areas on the development.
- Do not locate on a driveway, near water sources or upslope from a street.
- Use temporary seed, such as annual rye, to stabilize the pile; or protect the area with sediment barriers.

How Healthy Vegetative Cover Reduces Environmental Impacts

A recent study in Cuyahoga County measured the effect of an aggressive seeding and mulching program on reducing non-point source pollution from construction sites. The results showed that widespread seeding and mulching on a residential construction site reduced soil erosion by up to 86% and phosphorus loadings by up to 80%.

Topsoil makes for greener lawns, happy homeowners and less sediment in our streams.

Check It Out Yourself

Compare sediments in storm drains and streets near bare soil and vegetated soil. The difference is evident. The sediment generated by erosion will eventually find its way to a stream; polluting the waterway.

Topsoil is a key to profitable housing development.

The Franklin SWCD and NRCS Field Office strive to serve all people equally.

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resource Conservation Service

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