

INF-7: Underground Infiltration

Underground infiltration is a vault or chamber with an open bottom that used to store runoff and percolate into the subsurface. A number of vendors offer proprietary infiltration products that allow for similar or enhanced rates of infiltration and subsurface storage while offering durable prefrabricated structures. There are many varieties of proprietary infiltration BMPs that can be used for roads and parking lots, parks and open spaces, single and multi-family residential, or mixed-use and commercial uses.



Also known as:

- *Infiltration vault*
- *Recharge vault*

Underground Infiltration

Source: <http://www.contech-cpi.com>

Feasibility Screening Considerations

- Infiltration bains shall pass infeasible screening criteria to be considered for use.
- Underground infiltration galleries pose a potential risk of groundwater contamination; pretreatment should be used.

Opportunity Criteria

- Soils are adequate for infiltration or can be amended to provide an adequate infiltration rate.
- Appropriate for sites with limited surface space.
- Can be placed beneath roads, parking lots, parks, and athletic fields.
- Potential for groundwater contamination can be mitigated through isolation of pollutant sources, pretreatment of inflow, and/or demonstration of adequate treatment capacity of underlying soils.
- Infiltration is into native soil, or depth of engineered fill is ≤ 5 feet from the bottom of the facility to native material and infiltration into fill is approved by a geotechnical professional.
- Tributary area land uses include mixed-use and commercial, single-family and multi-family, roads and parking lots, and parks and open spaces. High pollutant land uses should not be tributary to infiltration BMPs.

OC-Specific Design Criteria and Considerations

- Placement of BMPs should observe geotechnical recommendations with respect to geological hazards (e.g. landslides, liquefaction zones, erosion, etc.) and set-backs (e.g., foundations, utilities, roadways, etc.)
- Minimum separation to mounded seasonally high groundwater of 10 feet shall be observed.
- Minimum pretreatment should be provided upstream of the infiltration facility, and water bypassing pretreatment should not be directed to the facility.
- Underground infiltration should not be used for drainage areas with high sediment production potential unless preceded by full treatment control with a BMP effective for sediment removal.
- Design infiltration rate should be determined as described in [Appendix VII](#).
- Inspection ports or similar design features shall be provided to verify continued system performance and identify need for major maintenance.

- For infiltration facilities beneath roads and parking areas, structural requirements should meet H-20 load requirements.

Computing Underground Infiltration Device Size

Underground infiltration devices vary by design and by proprietary designs. The sizing method selected for use must be based on the BMP type it most strongly resembles.

- For underground infiltration devices with open pore volume (e.g., vaults, crates, pipe sections, etc), sizing will be most similar to infiltration basins.
- For underground infiltration devices with pore space (e.g., aggregate reservoirs), sizing will be most similar to permeable pavement.

Additional References for Design Guidance

- Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Stormwater Technical Manual, Chapter 5:
http://www.laschools.org/employee/design/fs-studies-and-reports/download/white_paper_report_material/Storm_Water_Technical_Manual_2009-opt-red.pdf?version_id=76975850