



**DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF
WATER CONTAINMENT SYSTEMS
USING AKWASEAL™**



**A complete guide for the proper design and installation
of water containment systems featuring
CETCO's Akwaseal pond liner.**



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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

The information in this manual has been compiled using the many years of experience and insights accumulated by CETCO personnel and our dedicated team of sales professionals. Special acknowledgment is reserved for Joe Carmo who pioneered many of the design strategies for water containment that are covered in this manual.

S E C T I O N 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that the most beautiful places on earth are those where land and water meet. Perhaps this is why we endeavor to create such places where none had previously existed. Whatever the reason, synthetic liners are often required to contain the water in places where existing soils cannot. This manual shows how Akwaseal is used in the critical role of water containment in artificial ponds and related structures.



Figure 1-1. A properly designed and constructed artificial pond is functional and aesthetically pleasing.

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The primary objective in the design and construction of a pond liner system is water containment. If this objective is not achieved, the resulting empty excavation is a painfully obvious reminder of failure. Unfortunately, the mistakes that cause this failure may be time-consuming, expensive and difficult to correct. The purpose of this manual is to provide the design and installation information necessary to minimize the chance for failure.

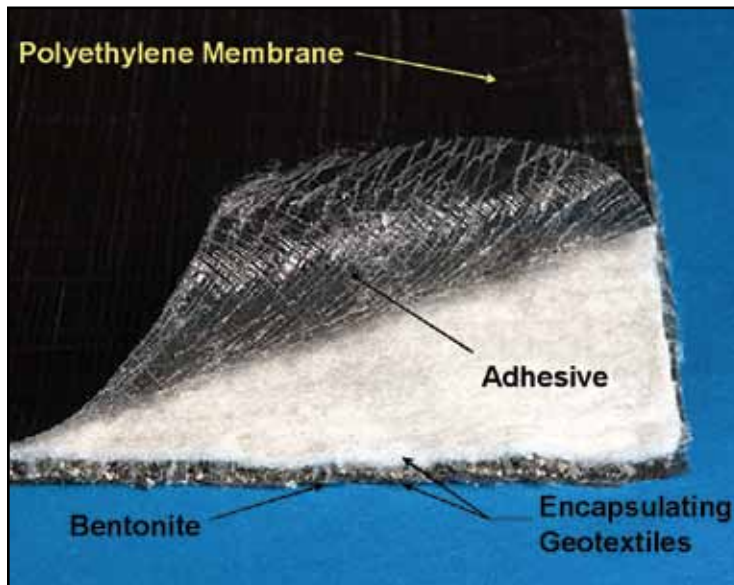
This document includes design and construction guidelines for the lining of fresh-water liquid containment systems, including ponds, wastewater lagoons, wetlands, and canals. These structures all have common or “universal” design elements as described in Section 2 of the manual. Section 3 provides additional design considerations that are specific to each type of water containment application. Section 4 provides liner installation procedures, and, finally, Section 5 covers operation and maintenance practices for ensuring long-term performance of the liner system.

It should be noted that this manual provides Akwaseal pond design and installation guidance. In any project, both of these tasks must be performed properly. The best design cannot overcome sloppy execution, nor can a superb installation compensate for a poor design. In other words, liner system design and construction are inextricably integrated, and every project should be approached with this concept in mind.

1.2 Limitations

The information in this manual has several important limitations as listed below:

1. This manual only considers those design parameters which will directly or indirectly address the performance of the liner system. It does not address other design considerations relating to the local ecosystem, hydrology, safety, seismic activity, and aesthetics.
2. This manual is to be used only for the design of fresh water containment systems. Different design and product selection procedures apply for the design of containment systems for other liquids, including salt water and brackish water.



3. The field performance of a pond liner system is typically considered acceptable (under normal, non-critical conditions) even when there is some small amount of leakage. A higher degree of containment may be possible, but is achieved at significant additional expense. It is the designer's responsibility to define pond leakage performance requirements with this concept in mind.
4. The design data in this manual applies almost exclusively to Akwaseal (Figure 1-2). CETCO Akwaseal is designated for pond lining because of its unique combination of superb performance and field ruggedness. Akwaseal consists of a polyethylene membrane that is permanently laminated to a bentonite layer which is encapsulated between two needlepunched geotextiles.

Figure 1-2. Akwaseal pond liner.

5. Excessive leakage through a liner system may occur in areas where the liner is damaged or vulnerable to damage. As the depth of the pond increases, the hydraulic pressure also increases, aggressively seeking the "path of least resistance." Improved performance can be achieved by limiting the maximum water depth to avoid excessive pressure-related leakage. As a general rule, the pond depth should not exceed 5 meters (16 feet). Deeper ponds can be successfully constructed, but more care must be taken with subgrade preparation, installation, and detailing.
6. While plastic geomembranes may be installed uncovered, Akwaseal is used only in soil-covered liner systems. Provided with cover, a properly designed and installed liner will function for many years.

1.3 Disclaimer

While there may be broad similarities within various pond projects, each project is unique. CETCO does not have the ability to anticipate and control topographical features, soil conditions, weather, installation quality, permitting requirements, and other variables. Therefore, it is the designer's and installer's responsibility to recognize these factors and to account for them as necessary. This manual is not intended to be used in lieu of a licensed engineer or architect when required by local and/or state regulations.

The information and data contained herein are believed to be accurate and reliable. CETCO makes no warranty of any kind and accepts no responsibility for the results obtained through application of this information.

S E C T I O N 2

UNIVERSAL DESIGN PARAMETERS

The designer must consider all factors which can influence the performance of the liner system. This section of the Manual discusses four “universal” design parameters that apply to all water containment projects regardless of the application. The design process starts with site selection, which involves evaluating the suitability of the proposed pond location. The next design parameter is slope stability, where the possibility of a slope sliding failure is calculated. The hydraulic performance of the liner is another universal design parameter. Finally, the fourth universal design parameter is chemical compatibility, where the water and soil are evaluated for their potential to degrade the liner system.

2.1 Site Selection

Several factors should be examined if the designer has the option of selecting the most suitable site for a pond within a given property:

Topography: The area immediately surrounding the footprint of the proposed pond should be fairly level if it is desired to minimize earthwork. Stormwater should drain away from the excavation rather than into it (locating a pond on a hillside or in a low spot presents some unique challenges with respect to stormwater control). If possible, the top of the pond should be at grade to allow easier access by heavy equipment. Ponds with above-grade perimeter berms are much more difficult to construct.

Soil Type: If information is available regarding the general soil type at the site, check to ensure that the soil:

- Is too porous to be considered acceptable as a barrier. A synthetic liner may not be required if the in-place permeability of the compacted subsoil is 1×10^{-9} m/sec or lower. The soil must contain some fraction of small particles (clay) in order to achieve a low enough permeability to be used as a liner.
- Can be compacted properly at the elevation of the proposed subgrade.
- Is not excessively rocky (Figure 2-1). Because they can damage the liner, rocks larger than 100 mm should be covered with fine-grained soil or screened out and discarded. The rocks remaining in the soil should not be allowed to protrude above the surrounding subgrade (see Section 4.3).
- Is chemically compatible with Akwaseal (see Section 2.4).

Utilities: Underground utility lines must be located and staked. The pond should never be located over the right-of-way of any utilities. Overhead utilities should also be inspected to ensure that heavy equipment will not contact power lines.

Dammed Streams: Water storage ponds for agricultural use are often sited within an existing streambed or drainage ditch. Caution should be exercised to ensure that the streambed has the bearing capacity to withstand loading during and after construction. If the downstream end of the channel is dammed to create a retention area behind the embankment, these bearing capacity issues are even more important. While a foundation analysis is beyond the scope of this document, any soil mechanics textbook can be consulted for proper design procedures.

Depth to Water: The depth to the seasonal high water table should also be known. Failure to understand local hydrogeological conditions could seriously affect construction. Excavating into the water table will make subgrade preparation and compaction almost impossible. Even if water infiltration does not occur, it may be impossible to obtain adequate compaction if the subsoils are continuously saturated. Dewatering may be required (Section 3.3.2).



Figure 2-1. Rocky soils may need to be covered with a layer of sand or geotextile prior to liner installation.

Hydrostatic uplift of the liner system is another concern in conditions where the elevation of the groundwater table exceeds the elevation of the water in the pond. This condition will generate an uplift force which may exceed the confining stress on the liner. For these reasons, an unsaturated zone of at least 2 m (6 feet) should exist between the bottom elevation of the pond and the top of the seasonal higher water table. If it is not possible to achieve these conditions, the pond will be more difficult to construct. Section 3.3.2 of this manual discusses strategies for managing high groundwater levels.

Trees: While trees near the pond may be aesthetically pleasing, they can interfere with construction equipment. Tree roots can make subgrade preparation difficult and affect the liner in the long term. In a completed pond, falling leaves can contaminate the water. For these reasons, trees should be set back from the perimeter by at least 20 feet and perhaps more for certain tree species.

2.2 Slope Stability

Special Note: This paper does not provide guidance for assessing global slope stability, relating to the stability of the soil beneath the liner. It is assumed that the site selection process has resulted in the location of the pond in an area with stable soils. Global stability considerations can be evaluated through several textbook methods. A useful summary of these considerations is found in Koerner (1994).

Most water containment applications require placement of the liner on a sloped surface. When a protective soil/stone layer is then placed over the liner, the weight of that layer induces a downslope (driving) force on the layers beneath it. The designer must ensure that the driving force does not exceed the frictional resisting forces between each component of the liner system. If this condition is not met, a slide may result. The consequences of a slide are generally severe and can result in failure of the liner. This section of the design guide assists designers in preventing sliding failures.

As shown in Figure 2-2, the driving force is the slope-adjusted weight of the cover layer(s). The resisting force is the frictional resistance between adjacent layers or interfaces of the liner system and the overlying cover soil. A low-friction interface will therefore provide little resistance and could cause instability. However, it is important to note that a liner system may still be stable even if the resisting force is less than the driving force. This is because additional contributions to the total resisting force may be provided by the “buttress effect” of the cover material at the base of the slope, and by the tensile strength of the liner anchored at the top of the slope. Appendix A provides a method of determining stability in consideration of these additional resisting components.

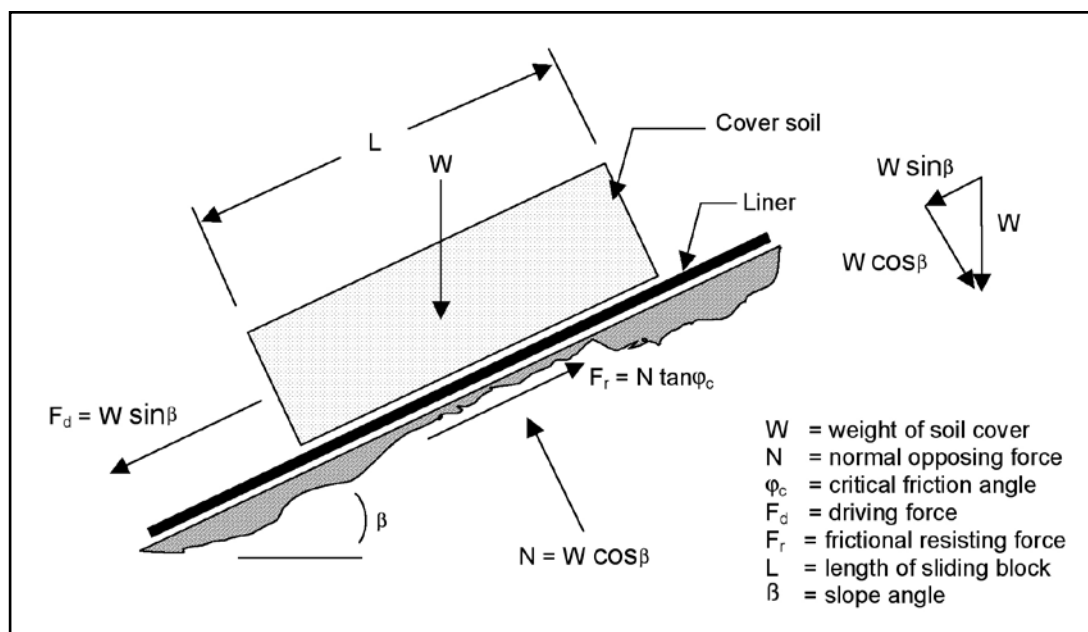


Figure 2-2. Sliding block slope stability analysis.

safety to account for site-specific variations in materials characteristics. In cases where the design factor of safety from the simplified sliding block analysis is insufficient, it may be desired to use the method in Appendix A which includes the additional resisting forces offered by toe buttressing and the tensile strength of the liner.

2.2.1 Recommended Slope Angle

Given the simplifying assumptions described previously, the slope stability problem becomes a textbook “sliding block” where the forces acting on the slope are the same in all locations. This means that the stability of a proposed system can be determined simply by comparing the interface friction angle between various liner system components to the design slope angle. If the lowest (“critical”) interface friction angle in the liner system exceeds the slope angle, the slope will be stable. If the lowest interface friction angle is less than the slope angle, the slope is potentially unstable and a sliding failure is possible. The analysis can also include a safety factor.

Based on historical test data, CETCO recommends that the maximum slope angle should not exceed 4H:1V or 14 degrees. In addition to contributing to stability, there are several other benefits associated with the design and construction of a slope that is 4H:1V:

- Natural appearance
- Reduced possibility for erosion-related damage to the cover layer
- Less maintenance of the cover materials
- Easier accessibility to and escape from the shoreline for waterfowl or for recreational use
- Easier installation of the liner and other layers in the liner system
- Easier subgrade preparation and compaction

For these reasons, a designer should make a reasonable effort to limit the slope steepness of a pond to a maximum of 4:1. This assumes that the liner is Akwaseal, deployed with the geotextile-laminated membrane side facing down, against a soil subgrade.

2.2.2 Steeper Slopes

It may be necessary to design the pond using slopes steeper than 4H:1V in order to obtain the necessary water volume or depth within a given area. In such cases, the simplified stability analysis presented above will show that the slope is potentially unstable, or at least will not provide a suitable factor of safety. A more rigorous stability analysis is required to determine if this is really the case. Appendix A provides a detailed review of this method, and the results show that the liner system can be stable on a steeper slope.

Slopes steeper than 4H:1V can also be made stable by designing with reinforcing members (such as geogrids or reinforcing geotextiles) to carry the weight of the protective cover. The reinforcement would be separately anchored at the top of the slope and would interlock with the cover layer more efficiently than the original interface. Where synthetic reinforcement is necessary, a more extensive stability analysis is required which is best performed by an experienced engineer or vendor of reinforcement systems such as Tensar. Reinforced slopes are technically feasible, but project costs could be significantly greater than if it is decided to grade the slope more moderately.

A mid-slope “bench” can also be considered for certain steep-slope applications. A horizontal shelf or bench on the slope will provide buttressing of the cover soil above it, allowing steeper slopes to be accommodated. The analytical method in Appendix A can be used to evaluate the benefits of a mid-slope bench.

2.2.3 General Design Guidelines for Slope Stability

Assessing the stability of lined slope for a pond application can be a difficult task, because many variables are involved in the calculations. Fortunately, the complexity can be minimized if we examine only the relevant data and site conditions expected for a pond. In order to develop some simplified slope stability guidelines, it is assumed:

- Akwaseal is installed with the membrane facing down.
- The soil cover layer is 1.5 feet (450 mm) thick, has a unit weight of 130 lbs/ft³ (20.4 kN/m³), and an internal friction angle of 34 degrees. This accounts for the possibility that some ponds will require thicker cover layers than others.
- The interface friction angle of the membrane component of the Akwaseal is the “critical” (weakest) interface and is 18 degrees.
- The desired safety factor is 1.3, which is typical for most applications.

Using these assumptions, the following general rules are established:

Table 2-1. Recommended maximum slope length and steepness for pond lining applications.

Important Notes:

1. Stable slopes are still subject to damage due to wave action, scouring, etc. See Section 3.5.
2. Method of Giroud and Beech (Appendix A) used to determine slope lengths for steep slopes.
3. Site-specific evaluations should be performed for slopes steeper than 4H:1V.

Slope Grade	Slope Angle (deg)	Maximum allowable slope length, ft (m)	Comment
0 to 4H:1V	0 – 14	Any	No stability concerns when the slope is 14 degrees or less.
4H:1V – 3H:1V	15 – 18	200 – 45 (61 – 13.7)	Maximum slope length may be limited in this range.
3H:1V	18.4	44 (31.4)	With 3 ft (1 m) freeboard, this allows a water depth of 13 feet (3.9 m).
3H:1V – 2H:1V	18.5 – 26.6	40 – 16 (12.2 – 4.9)	Liner will be in tension in this range of slope angles and lengths.
2H:1V	26.6	15 (4.6)	Maximum slopes on any project should never exceed 2:1.

Using this table as a guideline, it should be possible to design and construct lined slopes that will be stable in the long term.

2.2.4 Anchorage of the Liner

The liner is placed into an anchor trench at the top of a slope. The anchor trench prevents the liner from moving during, and in some cases, after construction. In the most conservative design, no tension exists on the liner, and an anchor trench only serves to prevent unintended liner movement during placement of the cover soils. However, the liner system can be in tension under certain conditions of slope steepness and loading. In these cases, the anchor trench plays an important role in ensuring stability of the liner system. An anchor trench with a 2 foot (60 cm) runout at the top of the slope and a 1 foot (30 cm) depth is adequate to accommodate the stresses that may be imposed on the liner.

2.3 Hydraulic Performance

The purpose of the pond liner is to function as a barrier to water. As a result, the baseline hydraulic performance of the liner must be demonstrated to meet any design or regulatory requirements under the anticipated service conditions. This section of the design guide identifies realistic performance objectives for a pond liner system and provides the tools needed to estimate how much leakage can reasonably be expected from a typical pond lined with Akwaseal.

2.3.1 Performance Requirements

The design objective for many ponds is usually no more sophisticated than to ensure that they “hold water.” Obviously, a more quantitative design process would be useful, not only to meet any existing performance requirements but also to establish a realistic set of expectations regarding the containment ability of a pond.

There are few standards for pond containment performance. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) states in their Agricultural Waste Management Field Handbook that pond leakage must not exceed 910 gallons per acre per day (gpad) at a depth of 9 feet (2.74 m). This is equal to 8,545 liters per hectare per day (lphd). On a regional level, the Midwest USA's Recommended Standards for Wastewater Facilities (1997), also known as the "Ten States Standards," set forth standards for the performance of municipal wastewater treatment plants. Chapter 90 of this document discusses a pond percolation rate not to exceed 500 gpad (4,695 lphd) at a water depth of 6 feet (1.8 m). This is a slightly more restrictive standard when normalized to the 9-foot depth stated in the USDA-NRCS standard, equivalent to a maximum leakage rate of 750 gpad (7,043 lphd). Both of these standards were formed on the assumption that the liner would be a compacted clay layer.

Whether these values are reasonable for other ponds depends on the specific needs of the pond user. In arid conditions, better performance may be desired to minimize the amount of inflow needed to maintain the water level. In more humid areas, some loss may be considered acceptable because it can be made up with run-on or precipitation.

On one extreme, we can assume that zero leakage is not a reasonable design goal. First, it would seldom be considered necessary, except in cases where an extremely hazardous waste is being contained. Such systems are beyond the scope of this manual. Second, the cost of obtaining a zero leakage pond would be astronomical, in consideration of the many redundancies that would be required to ensure that no water escapes. And finally, as with any human endeavor, it can be argued that "perfection" in the form of zero leakage is not even possible.

On the other extreme, the pond must not leak to the extent that the static water level visibly decreases or is held constant only by adding large volumes of makeup water. In consideration of these two extremes, it can be seen that the performance objective should achieve some sort of "equilibrium" where feasibility, cost, and containment intersect.

The nature of the subgrade soils and water table also play a role in determining how effective the liner should be. For example, a liner installed over a clayey subgrade may have several defects without showing excessive leakage. If those same defects were present over a porous sandy subgrade, however, there would likely be much more leakage. The depth to the groundwater table at the site can also influence the performance of the liner in a similar way. As a result of these practical complications, the design of an acceptable liner system for water containment involves evaluation of not just the liner material but also the surrounding soils and water levels.

2.3.2 Baseline Hydraulic Performance of Akwaseal

With its essentially impermeable membrane component, the hydraulic performance of Akwaseal is difficult to measure accurately in the laboratory. CETCO has worked with different laboratories in an effort to develop reliable estimates of the flux of Akwaseal for design. Data obtained to date indicate that a baseline leakage rate of 9 gal/acre/day (gpad) or 84 liters/hectare/day (lphd) can be expected for intact Akwaseal. It should be noted that this is a very low leakage rate that approaches the practical limits of the test equipment. For example, 9 gpad is equal to just 1 droplet per day in a laboratory test.

2.3.3 Seam Flow

As with any synthetic liner system, the potential for a leakage problem is greatest at the longitudinal and lateral seams where adjacent liner panels are connected. With pond liners such as Akwaseal, there is no mechanical attachment of the panels; they are overlapped. Properly installed, the liner should be self-seaming such that the hydraulic performance of the seam is almost the same as unseamed material. To achieve this result, some confining pressure is needed. The cover soil layer(s) provide this confinement, in addition to physical protection of the liner system from equipment, animals, and erosion. The net leakage of a seamed Akwaseal liner system is expected to be approximately 38 gpad (346 lphd).

2.3.4 Safety Factors for Installation Damage

With such low baseline leakage rates Akwaseal, installation quality is the most important factor in determining liner performance. While Akwaseal is not significantly affected by random puncture (due to the self-healing properties of the

bentonite), the liner itself can certainly be damaged during installation or covering activities, or it can be otherwise misused in a manner that causes high leakage rates. This makes it impossible to reliably predict field performance, except to assume that the leakage rate will be at least somewhat higher than what was obtained in laboratory tests as discussed in Sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5. Rather than accept an arbitrary leakage increase from installation damage, the goal should be to obtain the 38 gpad leakage value through careful attention to the installation instructions provided in Section 4.

2.3.5 Net Hydraulic Performance

This analysis of hydraulic performance considers baseline flux and seam flow in order to arrive at the following design value:

Design leakage through Akwaseal
= 38.5 gal/acre/day = 360 L/Ha/d
= 0.0014 inches/day = 0.036 mm/day

Actual leakage likely to be higher than this value, depending on subgrade preparation, installation quality, and other factors discussed in this manual. This value is a goal that shows what is possible in ideal conditions.

In practice, the use of Akwaseal should result in leakage performance ranging from roughly 40 to 500 gpad. In terms of water level decrease, this range is 0.0014 in/day (0.036 mm/day) to 0.018 in/day (0.46 mm/day). The upper level of this range was obtained from the 500 gpad standard discussed earlier, demonstrating that Akwaseal should easily provide acceptable performance even if installation damage occurs.

2.3.6 Evaporation

This analysis does not include loss of water through evaporation, which can range from 1-5 mm/day or more in certain climates. An evaporation nomograph or map (Appendix B) can be used to estimate daily evaporative losses given data on temperature, wind speed, and relative humidity. Of these variables, wind speed has the greatest influence on evaporation. In the United States, a local branch of the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) may be able to provide more information regarding evaporation rates. It is interesting to note that evaporative losses of several millimeters per day can exceed liner leakage by a significant margin. Further discussion about evaporation is provided in Section 5.3.

2.4 Chemical Compatibility

Any liner must have the ability to resist chemical attack when utilized in containment applications where contaminants may be present. Although chemical compatibility is actually a subtopic of hydraulic performance, this issue is worthy of discussion separately from the other hydraulic performance issues presented earlier. The membrane component of Akwaseal is not susceptible to attack by any chemicals that would be encountered in normal pond projects. Therefore, this discussion will focus exclusively on the effects of different chemicals on the bentonite component of the Akwaseal.

Sodium bentonite is an effective barrier primarily because it can absorb large quantities of water (i.e., swell). When the bentonite component of the liner hydrates, it becomes a dense, uniform layer with exceptionally low permeability and flux. Water absorption occurs because of the presence of sodium ions situated in the interlayer region between clay platelets (Figure 2-3).

2.4.1 Contaminant Effects

Sodium bentonite which is hydrated and permeated with relatively clean water will be an effective barrier indefinitely. However, the interlayer sodium ions can be exchanged with other cations that may be present in the water during the hydration or permeation process. This type of exchange reaction reduces the amount of water that can be held in the interlayer, resulting in decreased swell. Anions will also contribute to reduced swell. The loss of swell usually causes increased porosity and decreased performance as a hydraulic barrier. This is the primary mechanism for chemical

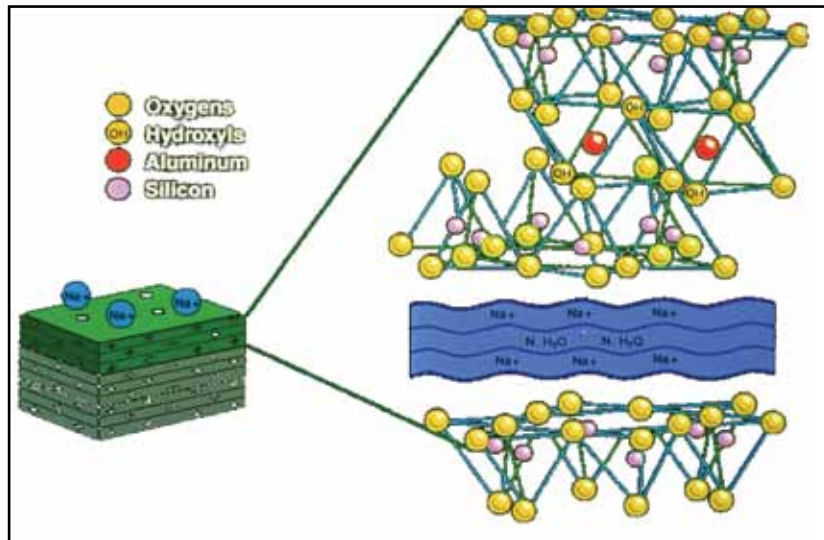


Figure 2-3. Bentonite lattice structure.

contamination of bentonite. Other chemicals such as organic molecules are far less likely to affect bentonite and are seldom encountered in concentrations needed to affect its performance. Table 2-5 provides a list of potential bentonite contaminants that are commonly found in liquids requiring containment.

Table 2-2. Contaminants that can affect bentonite performance.

Cations	Anions
Calcium (Ca^{+2})	Chloride (Cl^-)
Magnesium (Mg^{+2})	Sulfate (SO_4^{-2})
Potassium (K^+)	Nitrate (NO_3^-)
Ammonium (NH_4^+)	Carbonate (CO_3^{-2})
Sodium (Na^+)	Hydroxide (OH^-)
Iron (Fe^{+2})	
Aluminum (Al^{+3})	

Note: Other contaminants may exist. This list provides those that are most commonly encountered.

Experience has shown that calcium is the most common source of compatibility problems for bentonite-based liners. Other cations (magnesium, ammonium, potassium) may also contribute to compatibility problems, but they generally are not as prevalent or as concentrated as calcium (Alther, 1985). Such cations may already be present in the water to be contained or may leach into the water from cover soils on the liner. When the total hardness of the water to be contained exceeds 200 ppm (as CaCO_3), contact CETCO. Further testing may be required.

CETCO is often asked to specify the maximum concentration at which a certain chemical becomes a compatibility problem. Unfortunately, it is not possible to do so because of the many variables involved in assessing performance. For example, if the bentonite is hydrated in fresh water before exposure to high calcium levels, it will maintain a low permeability. But the bentonite will not perform as well when initially hydrated in the same calcium solution. In lieu of blanket recommendations, CETCO instead performs project-specific routine compatibility tests that determine if a chemical can affect the liner.

The liner may also be sensitive to the chemical composition of soil placed over it. CETCO recommends that limestone and other calcium-rich cover soils be avoided. Another method to overcome compatibility problems is to install Akwaseal with the membrane facing up. In this orientation, the bentonite will partially hydrate with clean water absorbed from the subgrade and will have very limited exposure to the liquid to be contained. Thus, even if the hydraulic performance of the bentonite is decreased, it can still function effectively in the secondary role of seam-sealing and puncture sealing of the membrane component of Akwaseal. Slope stability of the liner system in this orientation would need to be confirmed.

S E C T I O N 3

APPLICATION-SPECIFIC DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Section 2 of this guide discussed design elements applicable to all water containment applications. This section identifies those design considerations that are unique to specific types of applications. By combining universal design elements with application-specific design elements, designers will be able to assemble a comprehensive pond design. Some of these design issues (such as inlet/outlet structures in Section 3.1.1) do pertain to more than one type of application. Designers are therefore encouraged to review all of Section 3.

3.1 Lagoons or Sedimentation Basins

Some lagoons may contain effluent from industrial or municipal wastewater processing operations. Sedimentation and retention basins are designed to store runoff water and to allow suspended solid particles to settle so that clean water can be discharged. Akwaseal may be used as a primary liner, or as a secondary liner beneath a geomembrane in these applications. In either case, there are several issues a designer must consider to ensure proper liner system function.



Figure 3-1. Installation of Akwaseal in a typical lagoon. Inlet pipes in foreground.

3.1.1 Inlet / Outlet Structures and Penetrations

Lagoons may have inlet and outlet structures such as manholes, pipes, weirs, or bottom drains. These structures will generally require a penetration in the liner system, especially if a bottom drain is required. All such penetrations must be treated with special care both during the design and installation phases of the project. The hydrostatic pressure exerted by the water column is a tremendous force that will readily exploit any areas that are not secure. Rapid leakage and extensive damage to the pond are possible through a small breach in a containment system (Richardson, 2002; Bierwirth and Richardson, 2003). For this reason, CETCO recommends that lagoons should not have bottom drains, and that the number of penetrations and associated structures be kept to a minimum. A good alternative to pipe penetrations is a spillway which allows water to enter or exit the pond in a controlled flow.

CETCO does not recommend a physical attachment of the liner to a wall or a penetrating pipe. Instead, a positive seal is formed around the penetration as shown in Figure 3-2. First, a small notch is excavated around the structure into the subgrade. Next, this notch is backfilled with bentonite. Finally, the liner is placed against the structure and is held in place by cover soil (see Section 4.7 for additional details). Because Akwaseal does not thermally expand or contract, there is nothing to be gained by physical attachment of the liner to the structure. Such attachments can cause potential stress points and damage to the liner if there is long-term movement in the structure. A bentonite-based seal can better accommodate such movements while maintaining the hydraulic performance required for this crucial area.



Figure 3-2. Connecting the liner to a manhole in a wastewater treatment lagoon.

If buried or above-grade pipes are used in the lagoon, the pipes and joints should be pressure tested for leaks prior to being buried or put into service. This step will help to eliminate one potential source of water loss that could be confused with liner leakage after the pond is put into service.

3.1.2 Sludge and Sediment Removal

The designer must be aware of the long-term use and maintenance of the lagoon. If sludge or sediment will accumulate such that periodic removal actions are required, then the floor and walls of the lagoon must be designed to accommodate vehicle loads. The designer may also need to furnish ramps for vehicle access. A ramp design procedure is provided in Appendix C.

A layer of stone, asphalt, or concrete should be placed on the lagoon bottom to provide physical protection and to serve as an “indicator” layer for equipment operators who reach the lower boundary of the sludge or sediment. If stone is used, it should be roughly 2-inch minus (50 mm) in size in a layer approximately 12 inches (300 mm) thick to ensure that it will be noticed if penetrated. However, a proper cover soil as described in Section 5 must still be provided directly over the liner to prevent puncture. The indicator layer supplements, but does not replace, the protective cover.

Finally, it should be noted that maintenance activities requiring removal of the water should only be performed when the surrounding groundwater level is known to be below the bottom of the pond. This will ensure that hydrostatic uplift forces do not occur. This issue is explored further in Section 3.5.1.

3.1.3 Designing for Water Level Fluctuations

If water level variations are expected, the side slopes of the lagoon may need to be protected from wave action and erosion along their entire length. Frequent drawdown of the water level will expose interior slopes that, if not protected, will be susceptible to erosion. “Hard armor” such as rip-rap is recommended in these cases, as vegetative cover is not likely to survive. The use of hard armor will also reduce the risk of seepage forces that promote downslope sliding of the cover.

3.1.4 Gas Venting

Ideally, the site selected for the lagoon does not expel significant amounts of gas. Gas may be generated through degradation of organic matter or through the expulsion of air during periods of a rising water table. If the uplift forces from beneath the liner exceed the confining pressure above it, the liner can be displaced upwards. Damage to the liner is possible if uplift occurs.



Figure 3-3. In this pond, a layer of cover soil protects the Akwaseal and provides a foundation for a geotextile, upon which large stones are set in mortar. This armored slope will not be subject to erosion or deterioration by people or animals. This technique may not be applicable in freeze/thaw zones.

If the soil beneath the liner is porous, gas will take the path of least resistance around the lagoon and will not threaten the liner system. However, if the soils are less porous and less permeable, and if the surface area of the lagoon is large, gas venting may be needed. The design and placement of the vents depends on the amount of gas that may be generated, which is impossible to predict. CETCO is unaware of any analytical methods to estimate gas production rates from a subsoil; however, Koerner (1994) provides a method for calculating the gas transmissivity requirements for a venting layer that would be placed beneath the liner. Given the lack of good design data to address the venting concern, foremost consideration should be given to selecting a site that does not contain significant organic content.

3.2 Fire Ponds

Fire ponds must be designed to allow easy access for emergency vehicles. The liner system should be able to withstand rapid drawdown in the event that large quantities of water are needed. As discussed in Section 2, there are unique slope stability considerations relating the seepage forces that can occur when the water level is rapidly reduced. Seepage forces can cause stability problems in this situation, and it is therefore recommended to design hard armor on the side slopes of all fire ponds. Seepage forces may also be reduced by use of a drainage layer beneath the cover soil or by buttressing the toes of the slope.

3.2.1 Water Usage

A fire pond must be designed with a scheme for removal of the water in the event of a fire. Water can be extracted in several ways:

- Placement of a suction line directly into the pond
- Placement of a submersible pump into the water
- Access via a standpipe which runs to the base of the pond
- Hard plumbing via piping directly to an outlet at the facility
- Siphoning

The water access point will be determined by the type of facility into which the pond will be placed and the relative hazard level presented if a fire occurs. It is beyond the scope of this design guide to address these issues; however, it should be realized that different facilities will have different means of fire water access, which ultimately requires the access point to be compatible with the liner system.

3.3 Wetlands

The biological diversity within a wetland environment presents a series of challenging design considerations for the engineer attempting to create an environment that meets the conditions necessary to sustain a balanced ecosystem. A properly designed liner system is an essential component of a wetlands design.

A wetlands is an area that is saturated or nearly saturated with water and supports vegetation and wildlife adapted for wet conditions. The most basic wetlands consists of a shallow area that has a low permeability subgrade to provide the moist environment necessary for the propagation of aquatic plants. A more diverse ecosystem is established when changes in elevation provide zones of varying moisture for the establishment of other fauna and flora native to the local environment. Figure 3-1 demonstrates three different zones for plant growth based on different moisture levels, and a fourth deepwater zone for aquatic life. Each zone is established by the amount of fill installed above the liner system.

3.3.1 Performance Requirements and Liner Selection

The design of a wetlands usually involves a water balance calculation to ensure that the proper water levels can be maintained on a year-round basis. If inflow into the wetlands exceeds outflow, it may be desired to allow some controlled percolation into the subgrade. Thus, it is conceivable that other CETCO liner products may be successfully used in wetlands applications as a way to maximize cost efficiencies and hydraulic performance. The choice between standard Claymax, Bentomat, or Akwaseal would be dictated by the amount of permissible flux in relation to the makeup water that would be provided to the wetland areas. Darcy's Law can be used as shown in Section 2.3.2 to calculate flux to determine the type of line required. For example, it is quite possible that Claymax 200R or Bentomat ST under a 1 or 2 foot (30-60 cm) hydraulic

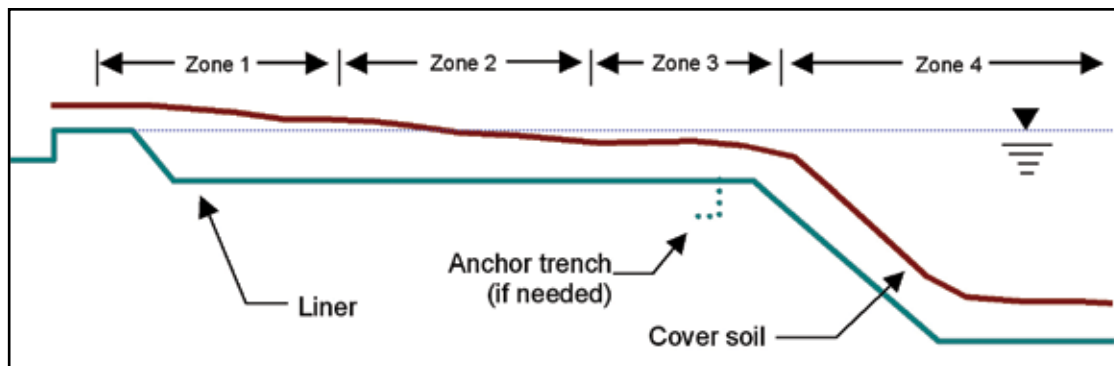


Figure 3-4. The zones within a wetlands will dictate the conditions the liner system will face.

head would function quite satisfactory in Zones 1 through Zone 3, while Akwaseal would be required in the high hydraulic head areas within Zone 4. Whatever liner system is chosen, it is critical to regulate water levels within each zone such that the vegetation can survive and thrive.

The transition from the deep-water areas of Zone 4 to the low water areas of Zone 3 can be handled in different ways. The liner may be deployed continuously through the transition area or may be terminated at the top of the transition. If slope stability calculations (Section 2.2) determine the liner will be placed under unacceptable strain, an anchor trench should be used. A new length of liner would then be laid over the liner in the anchor trench, terminating at the crest of the slope.

3.3.2 High Groundwater Conditions

High groundwater conditions may require creative design and construction techniques in order to establish a viable liner system. The best way to handle high groundwater is through installation of a dewatering system at the perimeter of the site to decrease the groundwater table below the bottom of the excavation. Local soil conditions will influence the effectiveness of the dewatering effort. Silty soils will resist dewatering and will not provide a structurally sound foundation necessary for long-



Figure 3-5. High groundwater conditions in wetlands projects make it very difficult to prepare a subgrade and install liner.

term liner performance. Sandy, drainable soils will more easily convey the flow of groundwater to pump stations, while maintaining reasonable structural stability and load bearing capabilities.

Another concern in high groundwater conditions is the potential for hydrostatic uplift. If the dewatering system is used only during construction, the water table could rise above the water level in the wetlands, thus causing a buoyant force as discussed more fully in Section 3.5.1. This is not an uncommon occurrence in wetlands work where the site may already be poorly drained.

High groundwater conditions are problematic on slopes also. Water migrating through the subgrade soil and onto the sloping surface of a containment area can cause slope stability problems both during and after construction. The designer should be aware of the potential reduction in interface friction that can occur in these conditions. Installation of a site-wide dewatering system is the best technique for avoiding all of these problems relating to subgrade moisture. In cases where site-wide dewatering is not possible, localized use of drainage trenches and drainage geocomposites may be used to allow the liner to be properly deployed and covered.

3.3.3 Consolidation of Subgrade

On many wetlands projects, it may be difficult to drain the subgrade soils. Therefore, the loading on the subgrade from the weight of the cover soils and the equipment used for its installation will cause consolidation. As water is released from the subgrade soils, it may accumulate a thin film between the subgrade and bottom of the liner. At this point it will be easy for the liner to slide out of position or for water pressure to be relieved through a seam “blowout.”

To address this problem, the installing contractor can place a non-woven geotextile and a 6-inch (150 mm) sand layer on the subgrade prior to the liner installation. The sand layer should be connected to the site dewatering system. On less critical projects, a series of drainage trenches filled with stone can be easily constructed in the subgrade to funnel flow to the dewatering system. Alternately, geocomposite drainage materials can be deployed over any areas requiring additional drainage. The geocomposite would simply be laid on the subgrade and tied into a drainage trench prior to the installation of the liner. All of these options serve the purpose of removing consolidation water and improving interface stability. A greater-than-normal GCL overlap may also be required when these conditions are encountered.

3.3.4 Cut and Cover Construction

In wetlands projects, application conditions are often difficult to predict. Designers and contractors may get caught with an unexpected high or low water situation without a ready solution for cost-effectively continuing the installation process. For example, groundwater flow may be so high and so disruptive that it becomes impractical to expose a large subgrade area at any one time. The only possible construction technique is to cut, install liner, and cover in a series of small operations. For this technique to work, the subgrade conditions must be capable of supporting operating equipment without subgrade stabilization.

The characteristics of the cover material placed over the liner are equally important as those of the subgrade soil. The cover should be sufficiently coarse and granular so as to drain freely and support the weight of the covering equipment. In cases where the cover soils are not so stable, it may be preferred to design a biaxial geogrid into the system (Figure 3-6). Experience has demonstrated that the use of a biaxial geogrid above the liner will function to tie the cover system together and provide some consistency when subjected to strain. This technique was used in a 200,000 sq ft (20,000 sqm) area within a 1,000,000 sq ft (100,000 sqm) wetlands project where the deep water (Zone 4) areas were several feet below the water table (Trauger and Burgio, 1994).

3.3.5 “Bottomless” Wetlands and Ponds

It may be possible to use the natural characteristics of a wetlands or pond site to minimize construction costs. For example, a pond site might already possess a layer of clayey soil at a prescribed depth, with acceptable permeability characteristics to function as a bottom liner. In this case, a synthetic liner would be installed only on the perimeter side slopes and would be “keyed” into the clay layer (placed into a trench) at the bottom of the slope in the same manner as the liner is placed into an anchor trench at the top of the slope.

3.3.6 Streams and wetlands

Akwaseal is well-suited for the lining of combined environments of wetlands and streams. In these projects, a meandering stream/wetland combination flows to a pond, where a pump recirculates the water back to the beginning of the stream. Figure 3-7 shows a large, shallow stream lined with Akwaseal and backfilled with river stone to eliminate potential erosion along the stream bed and its embankments.

In any wetlands project, it is necessary to maintain saturation of the soils. This is difficult to accomplish throughout the full width of the stream, because water tends to concentrate in a narrow area. A series of earthen or concrete dams can be constructed to pool the upstream water to control water flow and ensure soil saturation above each dam (Figure 3-8).



Figure 3-6. A drainage geocomposite was placed below the liner and a geogrid above it to facilitate installation and drainage.



Figure 3-7. Construction of a meandering streambed covered with stones anchored in mortar (above), and after filling with water (below).



Figure 3-8. Dams help to control water flow and allow saturation of soils behind each dam.

The top of each downstream dam should be at least as high as the bottom of the upstream dam to ensure complete water saturation the soil.

3.4 Canals. As fresh water becomes an increasingly more valuable commodity, the performance of water conveyance canals is being more heavily scrutinized. Existing canals are being rehabilitated to minimize infiltration losses, and new canals are being constructed with careful consideration of their hydraulic performance. The information in this section also applies to the lining of roadside drainage swales, which is becoming an increasingly popular means to limit infiltration of potential environmental contaminants such as oil, lead, and other pollutants that may be released in a spill event.

The design of a lining system for a canal must address the challenges of steep sideslopes, rapid water movement, and time limitations imposed by downstream water users.

This section of the design guide discusses these challenges and offers some solutions based on the use of Akwaseal.



Figure 3-9. Canals present unique design challenges due to the steep sideslopes and the need for continuity of the water supply.

3.4.1 Slope Stability

Trapezoidal water supply canals usually possess steeply sloping side walls which are problematic when synthetic and natural materials are layered together. Additionally, the surficial water velocity in the canal encourages erosion and scouring of cover materials placed on the side slopes. The canal liner must therefore support its protective cover and prevent it from being washed downstream.

When space permits, the easiest and most economical solution to the stability problem is to limit the steepness of the side slopes to 4H:1V. However, this may not prove possible in many cases, especially with rehabilitation projects. With a restrictive geometry, the stability method of Appendix A can be used to determine how long and steep the slope can be under a given cover system configuration. From Table 2-1, it can be seen that the maximum slope length at a 2H:1V angle is 15 feet (4.6 m). From this information and knowledge of the gradient of the canal, it is possible to calculate its carrying capacity. This will help the designer determine the geometry needed to convey the water within whatever space limitations exist.

The sideslopes of a canal may not be stable enough to support a layer of stone with an adequate factor of safety to protect against sliding of the cover layer or scouring during peak flows. In such cases, 3 – 4 inches (75 – 100 mm) of concrete should be applied directly to the surface of the geotextile side of Akwaseal. When concrete is poured or sprayed over the liner, the exposed needlepunched fibers on the surface of the liner embed into the first few millimeters of the concrete, creating a strong mechanical bond.

When the concrete cures, Akwaseal is intimately bonded to it and can be removed only with great difficulty. The rigidity of the concrete provides a strong “passive wedge” that improves stability, and the bond by Akwaseal prevents the possibility that the concrete will crack and delaminate from the liner over the long term. The concrete and Akwaseal liner system should be considered as an option for all water supply canals with side slopes steeper than 3H:1V.

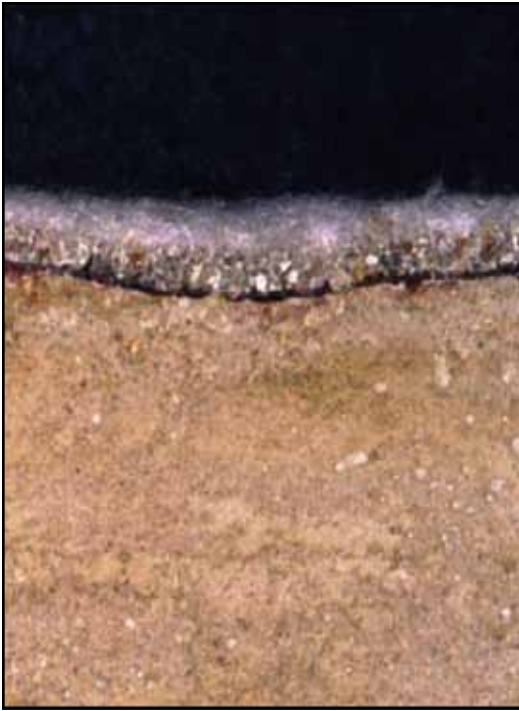


Figure 3-10. The geotextile side of Akwaseal will bond to poured concrete or Shotcrete, creating an excellent cover surface for a canal.

3.5 Decorative Ponds

Decorative pond owners and builders should understand that a liner system must be properly designed and installed to achieve success. Consideration of the design issues listed herein will greatly increase the probability that a decorative pond will contain water indefinitely.

3.5.1 Pond Shape and Geometry

It is generally desired for the shape of the pond to have a “natural” appearance, free of unusually sharp corners or angles. Gradual slopes, curves, and corner transitions are always facilitate easier liner installation. On the other hand, sharp corners and angles will complicate the installation process with more frequent cuts, seams, and detail seals. There is a greater chance of leakage problems when the geometry of the pond is too complex.

3.5.2 The Pond Foundation

Subgrade preparation and compaction in accordance with CETCO published specifications is the single most important earthwork aspect in pond design and construction. A smooth, unyielding subgrade provides the proper foundation to build a successful liner system. The designer should take special care to specify that the subgrade soils are capable of being compacted to the extent necessary to deploy the liner on an unyielding surface.

The pond designer should be aware of the seasonal high and low water tables relative to the minimum and maximum water levels expected in the pond. This relates to the potential for hydrostatic uplift. If the water table rises above the water level in the pond, a buoyant force is created (Figure 3-11). In some cases, the buoyant force could exceed the weight of the soil cover, thus causing uplift of the liner. This could lead to failure of the liner system.

There are two remedies to this potential problem. First, an excess layer of cover soil may be placed on the liner system to counteract the buoyant force. Because the submerged weight of cover soil is approximately equal to the unit buoyant force of water, a general rule of thumb would be to add one foot (300 mm) of cover for every one foot of difference between the two water levels. A second, simpler remedy to prevent uplift is to never allow the water level in the pond to decrease below the seasonal high water level. While hydrostatic uplift is definitely a situation to avoid, it should not be difficult to maintain the water level difference necessary to avoid the situation altogether. Any activities requiring removal of the water should be undertaken only after it is confirmed that the groundwater level is lower than the lowest elevation of the liner system.

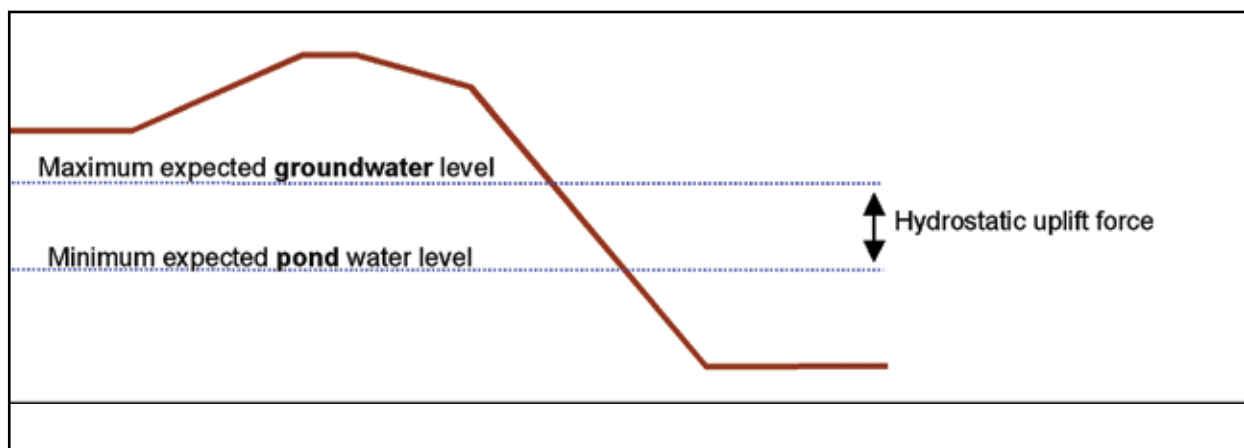


Figure 3-11. Hydrostatic uplift is possible if the groundwater level is higher than the pond water level.

3.5.3 The Pond Perimeter

The pond should have a relatively flat “bench” or very gradually sloping perimeter extending inward at least 5 feet (1.5 m) before a transition to a steeper slope (Figure 3-12). Not only does the bench allow access by wildlife and humans, it serves as a safety device by providing organisms a chance to exit the pond before encountering deep water. A well-designed bench also allows for rip rap (large stone) to be placed for protection against wave action and scouring.

Pond perimeters constructed only with a layer of cover soil are not likely to provide long-term protection of the liner. A hard armor system is recommended as shown in Figure 3-13. This cover system should be installed from the low water level all the way to the top of the pond slope.



Figure 3-12. A gently sloping bench has several advantages in a decorative pond.

In addition to erosion/scouring protection, the stone acts as a capillary break. In arid climates, evaporative forces are strong enough to pull water into fine-grained perimeter soils, thereby increasing the evaporation area beyond the actual water area. If a stone armor system extends to shoreline as shown in Figure 3-13, this capillary action is prevented and evaporation reduced.

In some cases, it is necessary to join the liner to a concrete or stone retaining wall. The objective in this case is to ensure that the liner provides continuous protection from behind the wall and into the pond. A tie-in detail is provided in Figure 3-14. When terminating the liner into existing concrete structures, the detailing should be performed in accordance with Figure 3-2.

3.5.4 Boat Ramps

The vehicular loading on a boat ramp must not exceed the shear strength of the liner system. The ramp design procedure provided in Appendix C addresses this issue in greater detail.

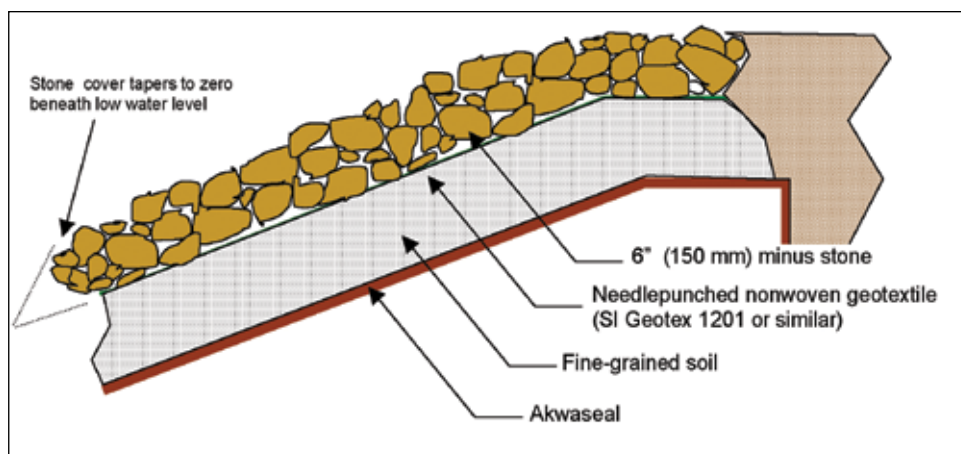


Figure 3-13. Shoreline armor system for long-term protection of liner and cover.

3.5.5 Vegetation

Depending on the design, it may be desired to establish vegetation at the perimeter of the pond and/or into the water line. In these cases, the depth of cover in the vegetative zone must be increased to a minimum of 2 feet (600 mm) to minimize the potential for root penetration into the liner. In any case, woody vegetation with persistent and deep root penetration should not be established in the pond. Over time, these roots may penetrate through the liner and its overlaps, contributing to increased leakage rates.

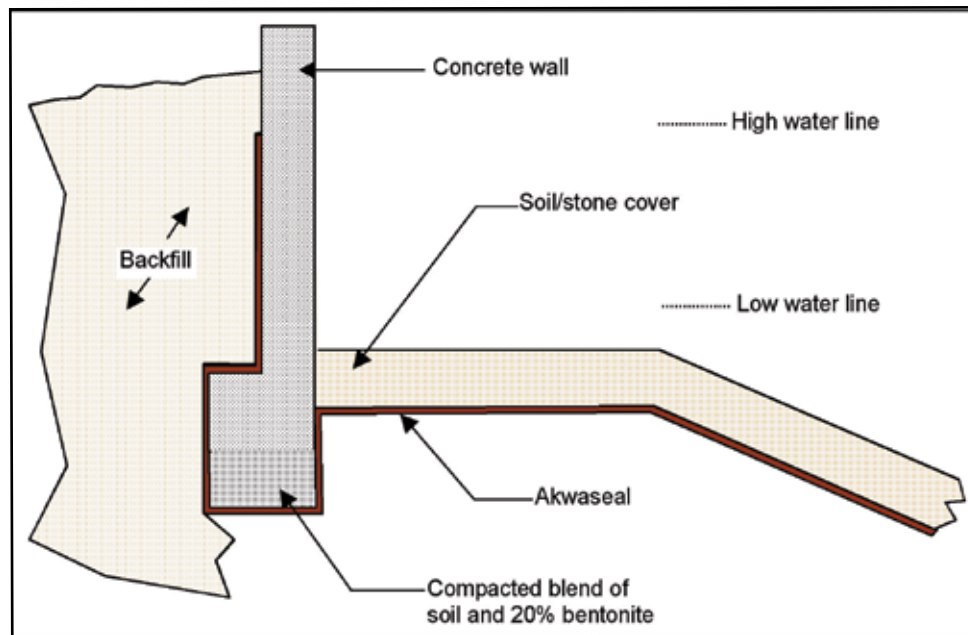


Figure 3-14. Perimeter retaining wall detail.

3.5.6 Rock Structures

Rock structures are often used to enhance the natural beauty and fish habitat of a decorative pond. However, large boulders should never be placed directly on top of the liner. Not only is it likely that the liner will become torn or punctured during placement, but it's equally likely that the boulder will compress and deform the subgrade soils which will further stress the liner. Two design and installation guidelines apply when working with boulders. First, when the boulders exceed 3 feet (1 m) in diameter, it is recommended that the boulder be seated in the subgrade, with the liner cut around and sealed to the boulder. When the boulder is smaller than 1 m, it can be placed on the liner system, but only after two layers of reinforcing/cushioning geotextile (such as Propex Geotex® 1201) are placed on the liner to protect it from damage. In this case, it should be ensured that the subgrade soils are strong enough to support the boulder without deformation. If this is not possible, geogrids or other reinforcement techniques should be used to improve the load distribution capability of the soil in the area where the boulders will be placed.

S E C T I O N 4

LINER INSTALLATION

As discussed in Section 1, a successful pond lining project requires both a good design and a good installation. Fortunately, the forgiving nature of CETCO liner products and the active swelling and sealing properties of bentonite make it relatively easy to successfully install the liner. CETCO Geosynthetic Clay Liner (GCL) Installation Guide is the primary reference on installation, but this manual provides additional details for pond projects.

4.1 Equipment

CETCO Akwaseal liner is heavier than typical synthetic pond liners. The installing contractor must have the proper equipment available to offload, transport, and deploy the liner. Using improper or inadequately sized equipment can cause delays, safety hazards, and damage to the liner material. Therefore, detailed equipment requirements are provided to ensure these problems are avoided.

The liner is delivered in rolls weighing 1,500 lbs (680 kg). A strong core pipe is required to support the rolls. Lifting and handling equipment may be obtained from CETCO; otherwise, the core pipe should meet the properties listed in Table 4-1. The core pipe must not deflect more than 3 inches (75 mm) as measured from end to midpoint when a full roll is lifted.

Lifting chains or appropriately rated straps should be used in combination with a spreader bar made from an I-beam as shown in Figure 4-1. The spreader bar ensures that lifting chains or straps do not chafe against the ends of the roll, allowing it to rotate freely during installation. Spreader bar and core pipe kits are available through CETCO.

Table 4-1. Core pipe requirements for safely handling Akwaseal.

Product	Roll Size, L x Diameter Ft. (m) x in. (mm)	Typical Roll Wt., lbs. (kg)	Core Pipe Length x Diameter, ft. x. in.(m x mm)	Minimum Core Pipe Strength
Akwaseal	16' x 24" (4.9 x 610)	1,500 (680)	20 x 3.5 O.D. (6.1 x 88)	160 Sch.

A front end-loader, backhoe, excavator, or other equipment can be utilized with the spreader bar and core pipe. Alternatively, a forklift with a “stinger” attachment may be used for on-site handling and in certain cases, installation.

A forklift without a stinger attachment must not be used to lift or handle the rolls. A stinger attachment as shown in Figure 4-2 can be specially fabricated to fit various forklift models.



Figure 4-1. Deployment of the liner using core pipe and spreader bar.

Additional equipment needed for installation of CETCO pond liners includes:

- Utility knife and spare blades (for cutting the liner)
- Bentonite-water paste (for sealing around structures and details) and/or granular bentonite (for seams and for sealing around structures and details)
- Waterproof tarpaulins (for temporary cover on installed material as well as for stockpiled rolls)
- Flat-bladed vise grips (for gripping and positioning the liner panels by hand)

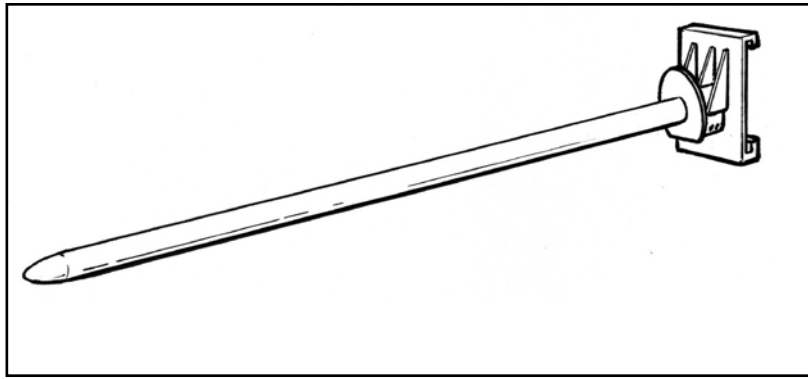


Figure 4-2. Typical stinger used for handling liner material.
The dimensions of the mounting plate are specific to the forklift used.

4.2 Shipping, Unloading and Storage

4.2.1 Shipping

To account for waste and overlaps, the area of liner ordered should exceed the lined area by approximately 12% (rounded up to the nearest roll quantity) depending on the relative complexity of the site. Two bags of accessory bentonite per roll of liner ordered is generally sufficient for overlaps, details, and penetrations. Upon receipt of the liner, all lot and roll numbers should be recorded and compared to the packing list. Each roll of liner should also be visually inspected during unloading to determine if any packaging has been damaged. Damage, whether obvious or suspected, should be recorded and marked. Major damage suspected to have occurred during transit should be reported immediately to the carrier and to CETCO. The nature of the damage should also be indicated on the bill of lading with the specific lot and roll numbers.

4.2.2 Unloading

The party directly responsible for unloading the liner should refer to this manual prior to shipment to ensure that they have the proper unloading and handling equipment. In most cases, the liner is delivered on flatbed trucks. To unload the rolls from the flatbed using a core pipe and spreader bar, first insert the core pipe through the core tube. Secure the lifting chains or straps to each end of the core pipe and to the spreader bar mounted on the lifting equipment. Lift the roll straight up and make sure its weight is evenly distributed so that it does not tilt or sway when lifted. **NEVER PUSH ROLLS OFF THE SIDE OF THE FLATBED TRUCK.**

The liner can also be delivered with two 2" x 12' (50 mm x 3.65 m) Type V polyester endless slings on each roll. Before lifting, check the position of the slings. Each sling should be tied off in the choke position approximately 1/3 the distance from the end of the roll. Lift the roll straight up so that it does not tilt or sway when lifted.

In many cases, rolls will be stacked in three pyramids on flatbed trucks. If slings are not used, unloading can be accomplished with a stinger bar and extendible boom fork lift such as a Caterpillar TH83 or equivalent with 8,000 lbs (45 kN) lifting capacity. Spreader bars will not work in this situation because of the limited space between the ends of the rolls. To unload liner rolls oriented in this way, guide the stinger bar as far as possible through the core tube before lifting the roll from the truck.

4.2.3 Storage

Rolls should be stored at the job site away from high-traffic areas but sufficiently close to the active work area to minimize handling. The designated storage area should be flat, dry and stable. Moisture protection of the liner is provided by its existing packaging; however, an additional tarpaulin or plastic sheet should be placed over the rolls for additional protection of the liner (Figure 4-3). Rolls can be stored indefinitely if these procedures are implemented. Rolls should be stored with the directional arrows oriented in the same direction to save materials handling time during installation (Fig. 4-6).



Figure 4-3. Proper storage of Akwaseal on site.

The material should be stacked in a manner that prevents them from sliding or rolling. This can be accomplished by frequent chocking of the bottom layer of rolls. Rolls should be stacked no higher than the height at which they can be safely handled by laborers (typically no higher than four layers).

4.3 Subgrade Preparation

The subgrade is the foundation for the liner, and its importance cannot be overemphasized. Proper subgrade preparation will greatly improve the chances for a successful outcome. Conversely, deploying liner over a poor foundation can easily lead to trouble. Every attempt should be made to adhere to the following subgrade preparation procedures.

Subgrade surfaces consisting of rocky soils or gravel may not be acceptable due to their puncture potential. The finished surface should be firm and unyielding, without

abrupt elevation changes, voids, cracks, ice, or standing water. Additionally, the subgrade surface must be smooth and free of vegetation, sharp-edged rocks, stones, sticks, construction debris, and other foreign matter that could contact the liner. The subgrade should be rolled with a smooth-drum compactor (Figure 4-4) to remove any wheel ruts, footprints, or other abrupt grade changes. All protrusions extending more than 0.5 inch (12 mm) from the subgrade surface shall be manually removed, crushed, or pushed into and flush with the surface. The liner may be installed on a frozen subgrade, but the subgrade soil in the unfrozen state should meet the above requirements.

4.3.1 Unstable Subgrade Conditions

Soft subgrade soils are often present in pond construction. It is essential that the subgrade be made firm and unyielding as described above, but in many cases the soils cannot be compacted properly. Several techniques are available to compensate for poor subgrade conditions. In moderately unstable subgrade conditions, the contractor may wish to install the liner during winter months when the subgrade is frozen. If this solution is considered, it is important to prepare the subgrade to accept the liner prior to freezing.



Figure 4-4. Use of a smooth-drum compactor for subgrade preparation.

Another means to improve subgrade soil stability is to eliminate pore water and consolidate the subgrade soils. In this method, a biaxial geogrid is placed directly on the unstable soil. A layer of sand or similarly porous soil is placed over the geogrid. The geogrid reinforces the unstable soils and distributes the loading of equipment and the overlying drainage media. Water collected in the drainage layer can be directed to a sump. The liner can then be deployed and covered, which will cause further consolidation and stabilization of the subsoils (Figure 4-5a). The overlap should be increased to 2 feet (600mm) in these situations.

Subgrades can also be stabilized by mixing clay or other more cohesive soil into the surface. For compatibility purposes, lime should not be used for subgrade stabilization unless the membrane side of the product is installed facing down.

If the subgrade soils are still not able to bear the load of the liner and its cover system, the design can be modified to include a higher strength biaxial geogrid and/or the incorporation of stone as shown in Figure 4-5b. Reputable manufacturers (such as Tensar) of geosynthetic reinforcement products offer design guides that assist in the identification of suitable products for this application.

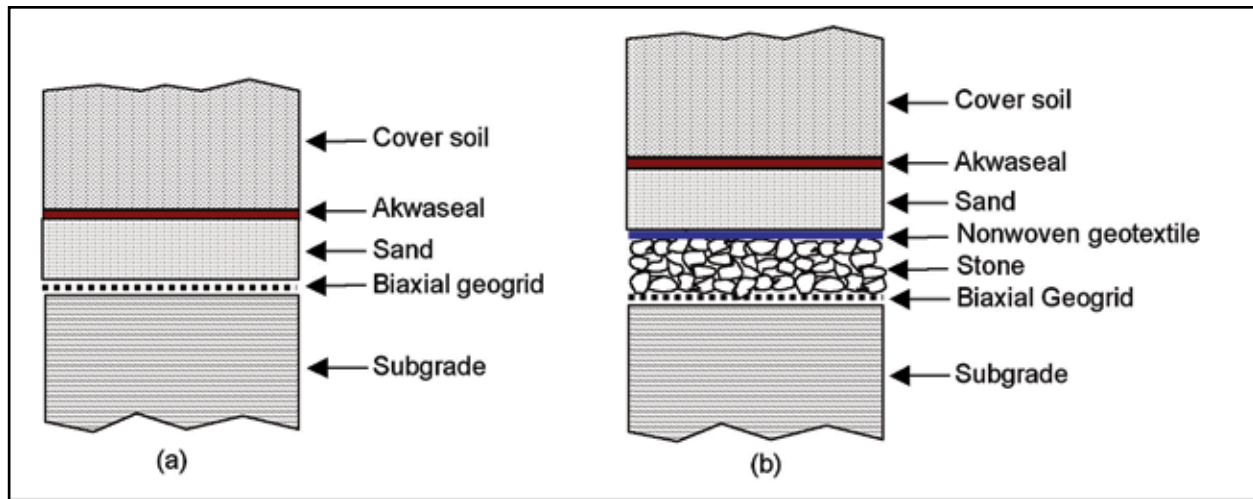


Figure 4-5. Use of geogrid and geotextile to reinforce unstable subgrade soils.

4.4 Liner Deployment

4.4.1 Basic Placement Guidelines

Rolls should be taken to the work area of the site in their original packaging. The orientation of the liner (which side faces up) is important. Unless otherwise recommended, Akwaseal is installed with the GEOTEXTILE SIDE FACING UP and the GEOMEMBRANE SIDE FACING DOWN (the product will “naturally” unroll in this fashion). The arrow sticker on the plastic sleeve indicates the direction in which the roll will naturally unwind when placed on the ground (Figure 4-6). Prior to deployment, the packaging should be carefully removed without damaging the liner.

Equipment which could damage the liner should not be allowed to travel directly on it. Acceptable installation, therefore, may be accomplished such that the liner is unrolled in front of backwards-moving equipment (Figure 4-7). If the installation equipment causes rutting of the subgrade, the subgrade must be restored to its originally accepted condition before placement continues.

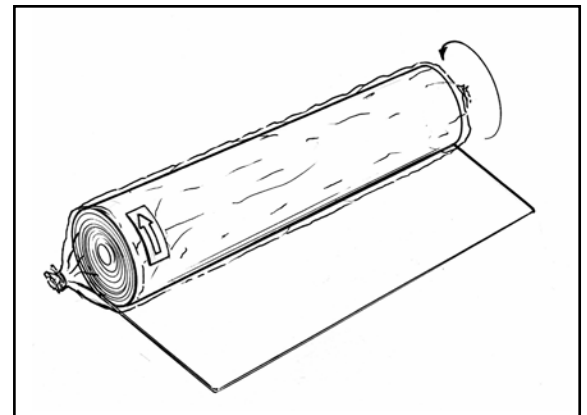


Figure 4-6. The direction of unrolling is shown by the arrow on the plastic sleeve.

If sufficient access is available, the liner may be deployed by suspending the roll at the top of the slope and by pulling the material off the roll and down the slope (Figure 4-8). Rolls should never be released on the slope and allowed to unroll freely by gravity.



Figure 4-7. Typical means of liner deployment, using a backwards-moving front-end loader.

Care must be taken to minimize the extent to which the liner is dragged across the subgrade in order to avoid damage to its membrane surface. In cases where there is no other choice except to drag the liner, a thin (20 mil or 0.5 mm) plastic membrane or “slip sheet” should be used as a temporary subgrade covering to reduce friction damage during placement. The slip sheet should be removed after the liner is deployed.

The liner should be placed so that seams are parallel to the direction of the slope. End-of-roll seams should be located at least 3 ft (1m) from the toe and/or crest of all slopes steeper than 4H: 1V. End-of-roll overlapped seams on slopes should be used only if the liner is not expected to be in tension (see Section 2.2). All panels should lie flat on the underlying surface, with no wrinkles or folds, especially at the exposed edges of the panels.



Figure 4-8. Manual deployment down a slope. It is generally not possible to pull the liner upslope.

The liner should not be installed in standing water or during rainy weather. Only as much material should be deployed as can be covered by the end of the working day with soil or a temporary waterproof tarpaulin. The liner should not be left uncovered overnight. If it is hydrated before cover is applied, the liner may become damaged. CETCO offers specific guidance on this situation as provided in Appendix E.

4.4.2 Placement Strategies

Placement of the liner for most ponds should begin on the side slopes. The main reason for this recommendation is to prevent rainfall from eroding and scouring the prepared subgrade. Another benefit is that the unlined bottom area can be used to stockpile and push cover soil onto the lined slopes. A roadway or ramp area should be left unlined to allow ongoing vehicle access into and out of the pond. Depending on the size of the pond, separate inbound and outbound access ramps may be used. The liner should be deployed on the entire slope extending into the bottom area by approximately 6 feet (2 m).

For corners, the liner should be placed in a “herringbone” pattern as shown in Figure 4-9. It is important for the liner to remain perpendicular to the slope. Panels from both sides of the corner will converge at the corner line. The triangular end of the overlapping panel should be cut along the corner line, while the end of the underlying panel extends beyond the corner line as shown in Fig. 4-9.

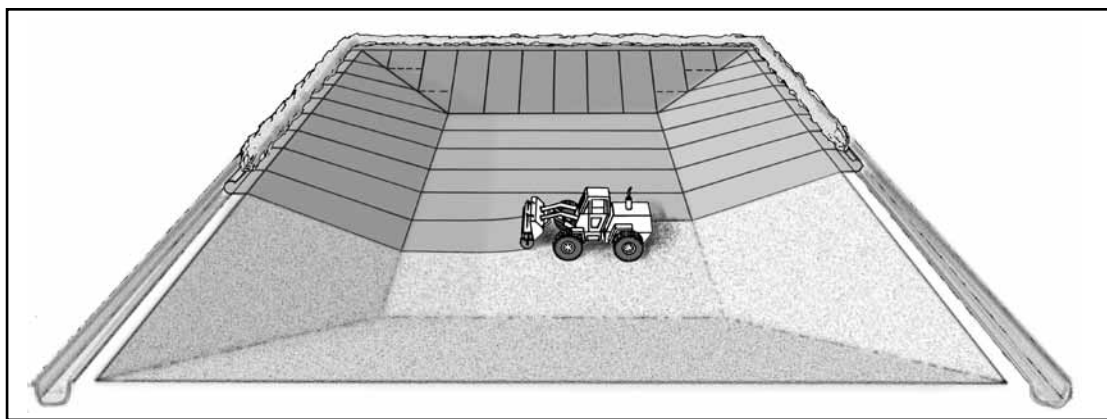


Figure 4-9. In corners, the liner should be maintained perpendicular to the slope and trimmed into a herringbone pattern.

After the slopes have been lined, the bottom area should be lined starting with the location farthest from the access ramp(s). Cover soils may be staged at other locations in the bottom area if space is available. The liner materials placed on the floor of the pond should be lapped under the “tails” of the liner previously deployed on the slopes, creating a shingling effect to convey rainfall off the liner system. Liner placement on the bottom areas should continue back toward the access road/ramp system, leaving it to be lined last. Covering of the slope and bottom areas should be completed before the ramp is lined.

4.5 Anchorage

The liner requires anchorage at the top of the side slopes. Anchorage is most commonly accomplished using an anchor trench as discussed in Section 2.2.7. The front edge of the trench should be rounded to eliminate any sharp corners that could cause excessive stress on the liner. Loose soil should be removed or compacted into the floor of the trench.

Soil backfill should be placed in the trench to provide resistance against pullout. The backfill material must be compacted using a hand tamper or a small walk-behind compactor. The size and shape of the trench should be in accordance with Figure 4-10.

The liner should be placed in the anchor trench such that it covers the entire trench floor but does not extend up the rear trench wall (to prevent water retention in the trench). For gentle slopes of 4H:1V or less, sufficient anchorage may alternately be obtained by extending the end of the liner roll back from the crest of the slope, and placing cover soil. The length of this “runout” anchor is project-specific but is usually sufficient at 5 feet (1.5 m).

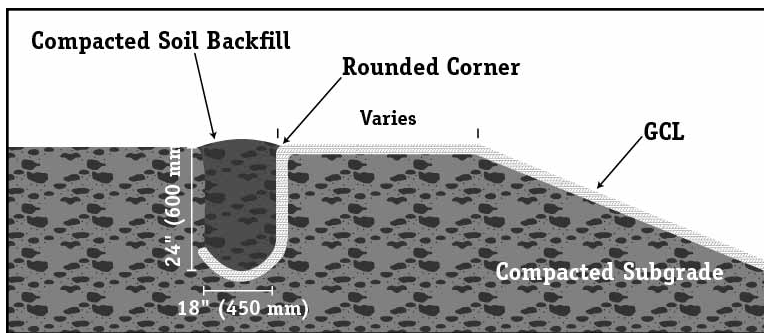


Figure 4-10. Typical anchor trench at top of slope.

4.6 Seaming

Seams are constructed by overlapping their adjacent edges. Each longitudinal edge of the rolls is marked at the factory with a “lap line” at 12 inches (300 mm) from the edge of the panel and a “match line” at 15 inches (375 mm) from the edge of the panel. The objective in seaming these edges is to place the overlying panel such that the lap line is completely covered (ensuring that a minimum required overlap is achieved) while allowing the match line to remain visible (ensuring that liner material is not wasted). Greater panel overlaps may be required in high-head applications or in yielding subgrade soils.



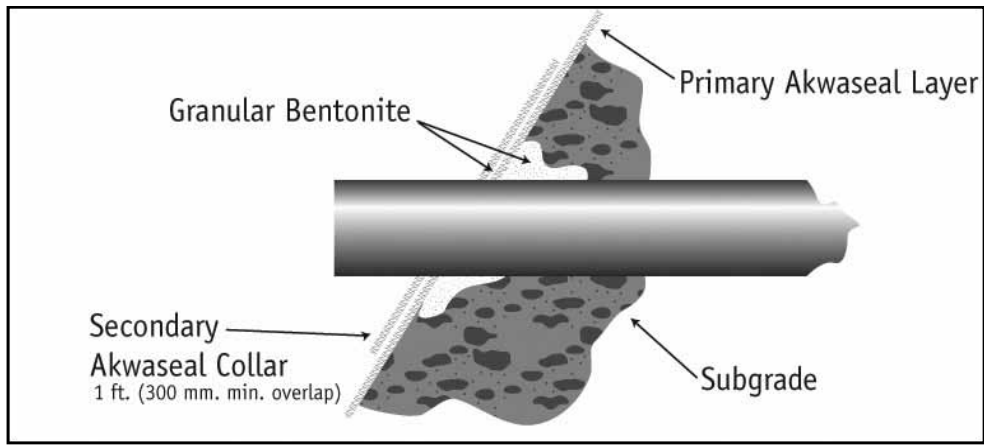
Figure 4-11. Seaming detail.

Before completing the seam, care should be taken to ensure that the overlap is not contaminated with loose soil or other debris. After the panels have been placed, the overlap should then be turned back so that supplemental bentonite (provided by CETCO) can be distributed within the overlap zone at a rate of one quarter pound per linear foot (0.4 kg/m). The location of this “bead” or “fillet” of bentonite should be at 6 inches (150 mm) inward from the edge of the bottom panel (Figure 4-11).

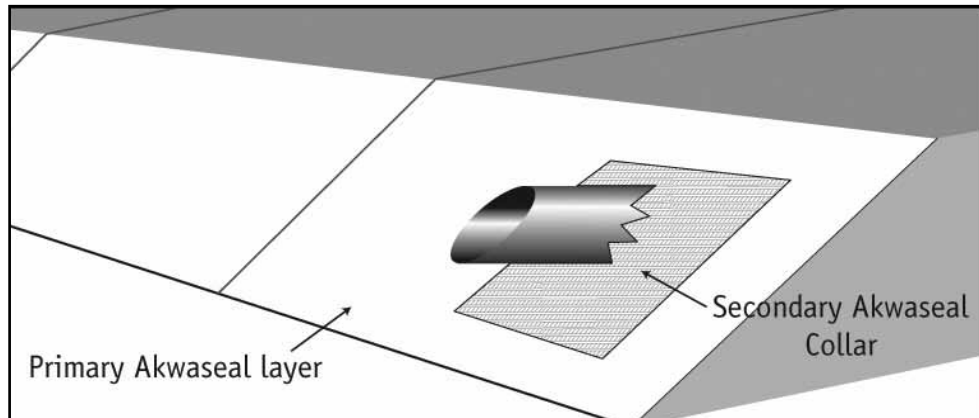
End-of-panel overlapped seams should be similarly constructed, except the overlap dimension is increased to 24 inches (600 mm). End-of-panel seams on slopes are permissible, but only if the slope steepness is 4H:1V or less. Overlaps should be shingled such that water flows across, and not into, the overlap zone. This is especially important in any application where water will be actively flowing, such as streams and canals.

4.7 Sealing Around Penetrations and Structures

Cutting the liner should be performed using a sharp utility knife. Frequent blade changes are recommended to avoid irregular tearing of the geotextile components of the liner during the cutting process. The liner should be sealed around penetrations and structures embedded in the subgrade in accordance with Figures 4-12 and 4-13. Granular bentonite or a bentonite mastic shall be used liberally (approx. 2 lb/lin ft or 3 kg/m) to seal the liner to these structures.



(a)



(b)

Figure 4-12. Horizontal pipe penetrations are potential leakage zones and must be detailed properly. These diagrams show the proper installation procedures.

When the liner is placed over a horizontal pipe penetration, a notch should be excavated into the subgrade around the penetration (Figure 4-12a). The notch should then be backfilled with bentonite paste. A secondary liner collar should be placed around the penetration as shown in Figure 4-12b. It is helpful to first trace an outline of the penetration on the liner and then cut a starburst pattern in the collar to improve its fit around the penetration. Bentonite paste should be applied between the primary Akwaseal layer and the secondary liner collar.

As discussed previously, vertical penetrations are not generally recommended because of their tendency to induce leak problems. However, if a vertical penetration is needed, it should be prepared by notching into the subgrade as shown in Figure 4-13a. The penetration can be completed with two separate pieces of liner as shown in Figure 4-13b. Alternatively, a secondary collar can be placed as shown in Figure 4-13a.

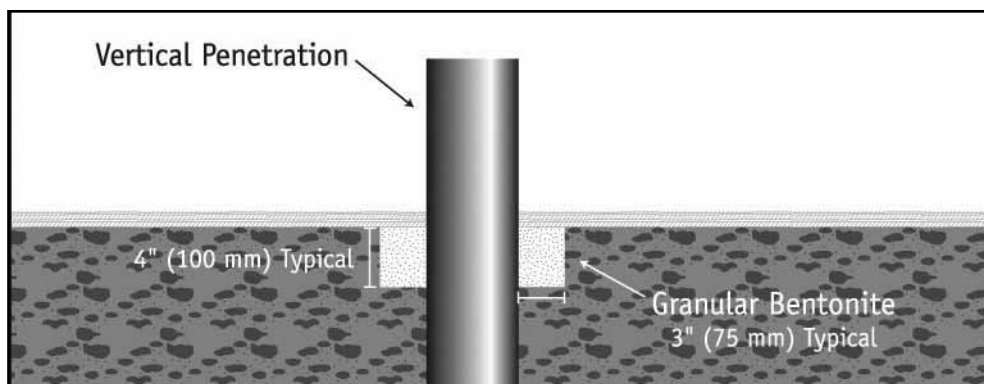


Figure 4-13

(a)

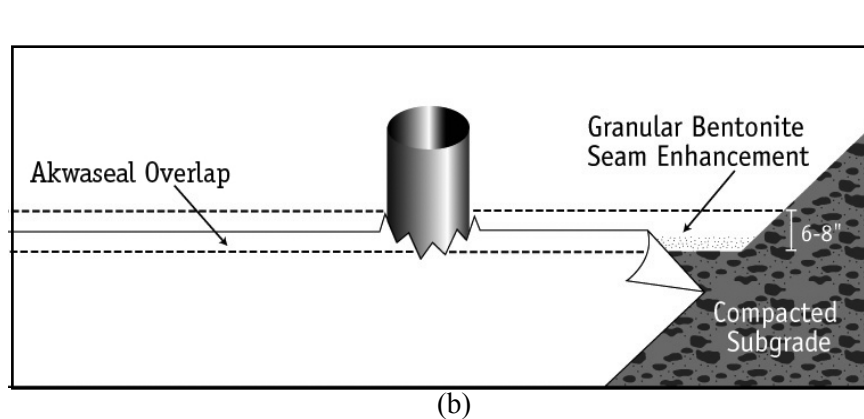


Figure 4-13. Detailing around a vertical penetration.

When the liner is terminated at a structure or wall that is embedded into the subgrade on the floor of the containment area, the subgrade should be notched as described in sections 8.3 and 8.4. The notch is filled with granular bentonite, and the liner should be placed over the notch and up against the structure (Figure 4-14). The connection to the structure can be accomplished by placement of soil or stone backfill in this area. When structures or walls are on or at the top of a slope, additional detailing may be required as shown in Figure 3-14.

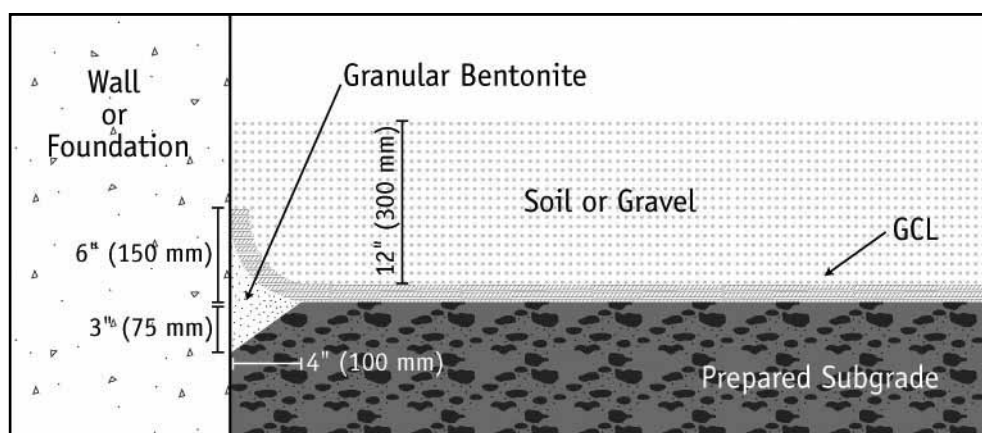


Figure 4-14. Termination of the liner to an embedded structure.

4.8 Damage Repair

If the liner is damaged (torn, punctured, etc.) during installation, it may be possible to repair it by placing a patch to fit over the damaged area (Figure 4-15). The patch should be cut to size such that a minimum overlap of 12 inches (300 mm) is achieved around all parts of the damaged area. Granular bentonite or bentonite mastic should be applied around the damaged area prior to placement of the patch. It may be necessary to use an adhesive such as wood glue to affix the patch in place so that it is not displaced during cover placement. Smaller patches also may be tucked under the damaged area to prevent patch movement.

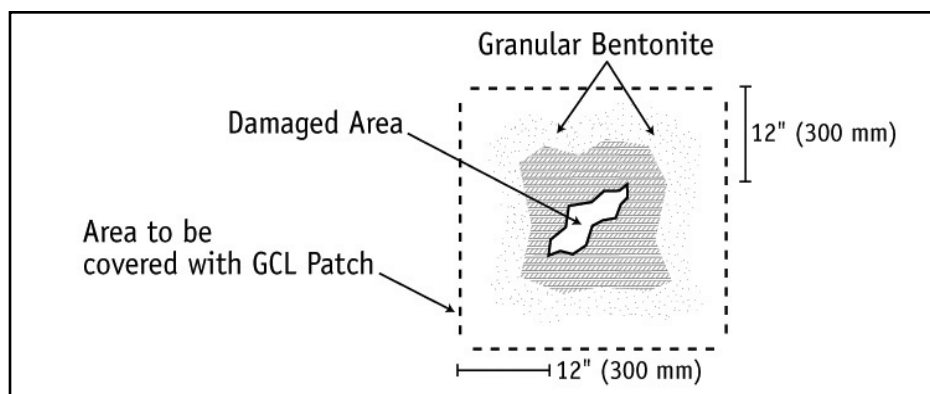


Figure 4-15. Damage repair through patching.

4.9 Covering The Liner

All pond projects require that the liner be covered with a layer of soil and/or stone. The cover serves several vital functions in the pond system. Specifically, it:

- *Confines* the liner and prevents free swell of the bentonite, allowing the bentonite layer to function effectively as a water barrier and to prevent flow within the overlapped seams.
- *Protects* the liner from damage by humans, animals, plants. Also protects against damage by ultraviolet light, erosional forces, and extreme weather conditions.
- *Beautifies* the pond by giving the liner system a natural appearance.

In general, the deeper or thicker the cover layer, the better the long-term hydraulic performance of the liner system. But it is seldom cost-effective or practical to install thick cover soil layers. A more practical question is, how much cover is necessary to provide adequate containment?

4.9.1 Cover Thickness

The minimum recommended thickness of cover soil on the liner is 12 inches or 300 mm. This recommendation is based on the following:

1. The confining stress provided by 300 mm of soil is adequate to keep the overlaps closed and to prevent lateral seam leakage.
2. A soil layer of 300 mm is sufficient to distribute loads from typical earthmoving equipment which would otherwise damage the liner. Fox, et. al. (1998) performed a comprehensive study examining many different cover materials, thicknesses, and placement methods. The most important result of the study was that, when adequate cover thickness was in place, equipment had little influence on the physical integrity and performance of the liner.
3. It is very difficult to install thinner layers of soil on a liner without damaging it.

Some projects may require more cover material when disruptive forces such as scouring or wave action are considered. In these projects, up to 2 feet (600 mm) of cover may be necessary. Fine-grained soil would be placed directly on Akwaseal, followed by a cushioning geotextile and a layer of angular stone (Figure 3-13).



Figure 4-16. Cover soils should be pushed from the bottom of the slope up, not from the top down.

4.9.2 Cover Placement

Equipment operators should understand that the liner must be protected. They must not allow soil or stone to fall a long distance when a loader bucket is emptied. They must not drive directly on the liner unless it is proven that the vehicle in question can do so without damaging the liner. As a general rule, tracked equipment should not be permitted to come in direct contact with the liner. Rubber-tired equipment is usually acceptable, assuming a firm foundation has been established.

Cover placement activities typically involve one piece of equipment dumping the cover in a pile near the site, and one piece of equipment spreading the cover. These activities should be coordinated such that the placement effort does not outpace the covering effort. At the end of the working day, the exposed liner should be completely covered with the exception of a leading edge where the next day's liner installation will overlap. This will ensure that the liner will not be accidentally damaged and displaced by equipment or other forces. The leading edge of the liner should be protected from damage by rolling it under itself. If the leading edge is at the base of a slope to be covered, plywood sheets will afford protection while allowing access by cover placement equipment.

Cover for the liner should be placed at the bottom of the excavation so that it can be pushed upslope (Figure 4-16). Although it may be more convenient to dump cover soil at the top of the pond and push it downslope, enormous tensile stresses can occur on the liner from the thick cover layer resting (without a toe buttress) on the slope and from the weight of the equipment pushing on it. By staging liner deployment such that one or more access ramps are left unlined until the end of the project (Figure 4-17), the cover soil can be efficiently delivered to the bottom of the pond without damaging the liner system or causing undue expense. It is important to include this provision in the project specifications so that contractors can plan for this covering methodology.

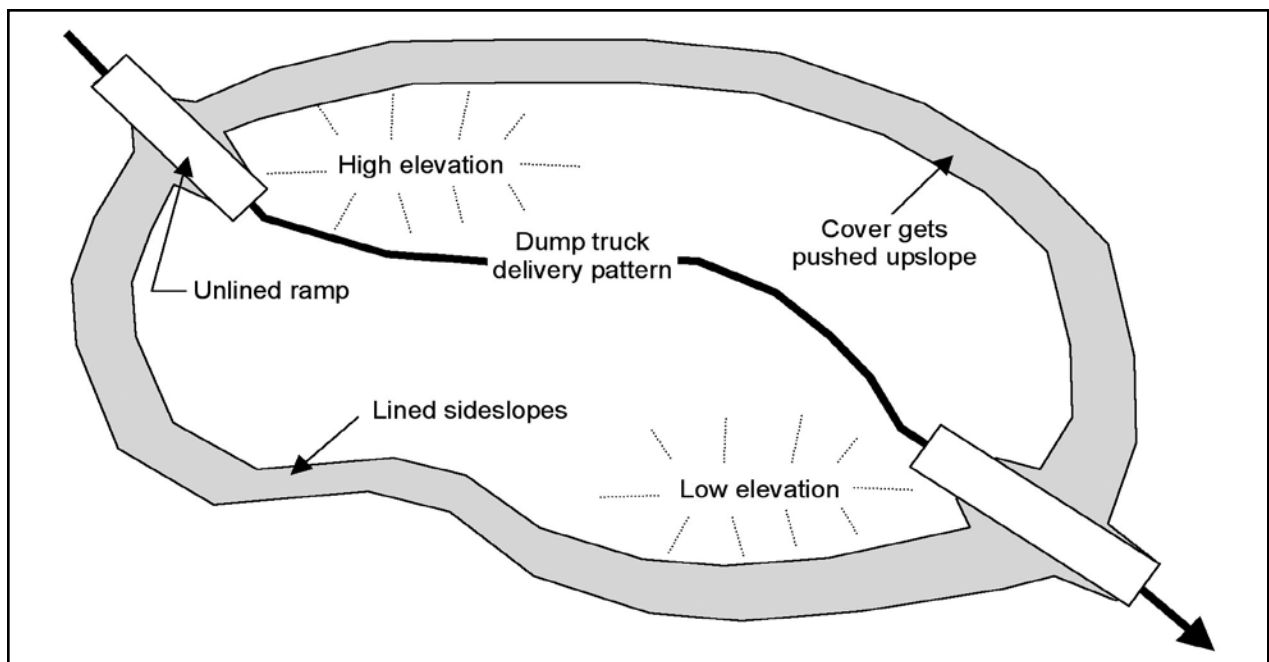


Figure 4-17. Suggested operations flow for movement of cover materials.

4.9.3 Cover Type

The cover on the liner must not contain large and/or angular stones capable of damaging the liner. Cover soils should have a particle size ranging from fine to < 1 inch (25 mm) in diameter, unless a cushioning geotextile is placed on the liner. Common sense should play a primary role in assessing the suitability of the cover. If there are many sharp stones visible in the proposed cover soil, then it probably is not an appropriate material. Stone may be used as cover only if it is a washed gravel or similarly graded materials that does not possess sharp edges.

The cover should also be compactable. Non-cohesive soil (pure sand) and fat clay may not be suitable if the soil cannot be placed and trafficked by equipment without rutting. Therefore, dry soils should be wetted to improve workability and compaction, and especially wet soils may require additional time to dry out before being placed over the GCL.

4.10 Cover Soil/Stone Stability

The liquid containment system must be designed to provide long-term performance under all expected operating conditions. Fundamental to this objective is the integrity and stability of the cover soil. Akwaseal needs the confinement provided by cover soil so that the overlaps will self-seal and the bentonite is not permitted to reach free-swell conditions. Failure to provide and maintain these conditions could result in failure of the liner system. In other words, when confinement is provided through an initial application of cover, that cover must not be compromised.

4.10.1 Erosion Prevention

Erosion occurs as a result of a driving force of rapidly moving water which overcomes the gravitational and cohesive resisting forces of a cover soil. In pond applications, rapidly moving water can be caused by drainage of a sloped area or by shoreline wave impact. Erosion can be prevented in two ways. The first and most cost-effective preventative strategy is to utilize sensible design practices:

- Use moderate slopes. Water velocity can be reduced if grades are as gentle as possible.
- Use erosion-control materials. Mulch and hay bales represent the crudest form of erosion control products, but there are a variety of cost-effective natural fiber and synthetic products that offer superior performance over a longer term.
- Limit slope lengths. A long slope will allow water velocity to reach critical levels. Shorter slopes and mid-slope diversion swales will alleviate this problem.
- Use energy diffusion devices. Inflow and outflow areas within a pond may be subjected to scouring by rapidly moving water. Water velocities can be reduced in these areas by erecting baffles, deploying large stones, or installing other energy-diffusion structures.

4.10.2 Alternative Cover Materials

Interior sideslopes of ponds may be exposed to wave action, animal contact, fluctuating water levels, and equipment loadings such as mowers or other vehicles. All of these elements can contribute to erosion, and for this reason, alternative cover materials may be required. The use of concrete, rip rap, or protective geotextiles are all valid means by which slopes may be preserved. More detail on these techniques is provided in Section 3.

4.11 Weather

Akwaseal is rugged and durable product than can withstand wet conditions during installation. Provided that the sub-grade still meets the properties described in Section 4.3, the liner may be installed in wet and rainy (or snowy) weather. If these conditions cause subgrade instability, special procedures as described Section 4.3.1 should be utilized.

The bentonite component of Akwaseal will absorb water in wet conditions. As a result, the liner becomes heavier and more difficult to move. It also becomes softer and more susceptible to damage by installation equipment or by stones in the cover soil. For these reasons, extra care should be taken when the product is installed in wet weather.

Akwaseal is not affected by warm or cold temperatures and there are no restrictions or limitations relating to ambient temperatures, again provided that the subgrade can be properly prepared.

Wind uplift during installation is possible, although rare, with Akwaseal. Very high winds may be able to displace the liner, and so some form of ballast should be used if these conditions are present. Sandbags are commonly used for this purpose. Due to the self-weight of Akwaseal, wind uplift is not encountered frequently.

4.12 Construction Quality Assurance (CQA)

Construction Quality Assurance refers to a set of procedures performed during the project to ensure that the liner is placed and covered in accordance with the instructions provided herein. In critical projects, a CQA plan is developed and implemented by a third party who may provide inspections, tests, and measurements to confirm proper installation. In most pond projects, this added level of oversight may not be necessary or desirable. However, some CQA concepts are useful to employ even in the absence of a dedicated CQA plan.

The most important CQA procedures are those which can prevent damage to the liner. Prior to installation, the subgrade should be inspected for soft spots, protrusions, and uneven surfaces (such as ruts). These areas should be repaired before the liner is deployed. Prior to covering, the liner itself should also be inspected to ensure that it has not been damaged; the overlaps are adequate, and that the details and penetrations have been properly constructed. Finally, the covering process should be monitored to ensure that the liner is not damaged by equipment or rocks in the cover soil. Periodic thickness measurements should also be taken. If CQA oversight functions are performed as described above, there is a far greater chance that problems will be prevented. The owner of the pond should make sure that a record of CQA activities and inspections is created as part of the contract documents. CQA services are typically provided by a third-party company.

SECTION 5

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The purpose of this manual is to illustrate sound design and construction practices needed to ensure long-term performance of the liner system. Ideally, a properly designed and constructed pond liner system will require very little maintenance. But water can be a very destructive force, and so it is worthwhile to discuss the procedures needed to maintain the original condition and function of the liner.

5.1 Initial Filling

The pond is most vulnerable to erosion and scouring damage immediately after its construction. Heavy rainfall and over-aggressive filling procedures can wash soil cover off the slopes and even displace the liner altogether. Special care must be taken at this critical time in order to protect the integrity of the completed construction.

Filling of the pond may occur through natural precipitation, run-on, or through adding water. Whatever means are selected to introduce water to the pond, it is essential to eliminate turbulent flow conditions which can scour and erode the cover soil. The less cohesive the cover soil, the more prone it will be to washout. Heavy rains immediately after construction are a worst-case scenario because erosion rills and gullies can form, especially on the side slopes. This is another reason why hard armor on the side slopes is beneficial. If such a rain event occurs, eroded soils must be replaced and recompact to a minimum depth of 12 inches (300 mm) and a preferred depth of 18 inches (450 mm).

When adding water through a hose, the velocity of the water from the nozzle will cause similar erosion problems. An apron of rock should be placed around the nozzle to dissipate this destructive force. For ponds that will fill by run-on from a stream entering the pond, this entry area should be protected with rock as well. As a general rule, the velocity of any water entering the pond should be kept as low as possible until the pond is filled to its design depth.

Prior to filling the pond with water, all piping servicing the pond should be pressure-tested for leaks at joints and valves. This is a critical step in eliminating a potential source of water loss that could be incorrectly interpreted as pond leakage at a later time.

5.2 Sludge and Sediment Removal

As discussed in Section 3, in certain applications such as sedimentation basins and sludge lagoons, it may be necessary to periodically remove the water and excavate the accumulated solids on the bottom of the lagoon. In such cases, the removal should be performed using methods and equipment that will not damage the liner.

There is little doubt that concrete provides the best surface for periodic removal operations. It protects the liner, distributes vehicle loads, and ensures that a certain minimum distance will always be maintained between the equipment and surface of the liner. While similar benefits exist with a stone layer, it is more vulnerable to accidental excavation.

Equipment loading on the liner system must be evaluated both on flat interior areas of the lagoon as well as slopes. Dedicated ramp areas designed into the lagoon (Appendix D) will help prevent the possibility that heavy vehicle loads will be imposed on other sideslopes that are not adequately reinforced.

5.3 Performance Monitoring

It is difficult to quantitatively monitor the performance of the liner system. To estimate the liner seepage rate in an existing lagoon, a water balance must be performed which considers sources of inflow and outflow as shown below:

Sources of Inflow	Sources of Outflow
Streams = S	Liner leakage = L
Precipitation = P	Evaporation = E
Run-on = R	Overflow = O

The change in water level (ΔD) is therefore the difference between the sum of the outflow sources and the sum of the inflow sources. If ΔD is positive, the water level is rising; if ΔD is negative, the water level is dropping. In a situation where the amount of leakage is suspected to be excessive, it is useful to perform a water balance calculation as a means to assess the problem.

To measure water loss, a measuring stick should be placed in the water column, far enough from shore to minimize the effects of wave action. An initial reading should be made at time zero, with subsequent readings made once each day. If water loss is not accurately recordable in one day, then allow several days to elapse before taking the next measurement, and obtain a value for ΔD by dividing the total observed water loss by the number of days in the observation period. If there is precipitation during this time, a rain gage should be used and these values recorded also. With this data, a water balance calculation can be performed to determine whether the liner is performing adequately.

Example: A farmer suspects that his Akwaseal-lined 2.5 acre (1 Ha) irrigation pond is leaking excessively. He measures a water level decrease of 0.75 inches (19 mm) over 5 days. During this observation period there was a 1-inch (25 mm) rainfall. The water level has already dropped below the outflow spillway. The pond has no inflow spillway and there has been no run-on. The average temperature during this time was 80 °F (26.7 °C); the average relative humidity was 58%, and the average wind speed was approximately 8 mph (14 Km/h). Is the liner leakage rate within accepted standards?

Answer:

$\Delta D = \Sigma \text{ inflow sources} - \Sigma \text{ outflow sources}$ (Equation 5-1)

$\Delta D = (S + P + R) - (L + E + O)$, where:

$\Delta D = -19 \text{ mm} / 5 \text{ days} = -3.8 \text{ mm/day}$

$S = 0$ because there is no inflow source

$P = 25 \text{ mm} / 5 \text{ days} = 5 \text{ mm/day}$

$R = 0$

$L = \text{liner leakage, the unknown variable}$

$E = 6.7 \text{ mm/day}$ as indicated by the evaporation nomograph in Appendix B

$O = 0$ because the water level is below the outflow pipe

Inserting the variables into Equation 5-1 and solving for the liner leakage rate, we obtain:

$\Delta D = (S + P + R) - (L + E + O)$

$-3.8 = (0 + 5 + 0) - (L + 6.7 + 0)$

$-3.8 = 5 - L - 6.7$

$L = 3.8 - 1.7 = \underline{2.1 \text{ mm/day}}$

Comparing this value for L to the net leakage of 0.036 mm/day calculated in Section 2.3.7, we can see that the pond is leaking more than would be expected based on the properties of the liner system. However, it is important to note that evaporation, not leakage, is the largest source of water loss in this example. Performing this calculation is useful if for no other reason than to understand this point.

Appendix B, which contains the nomograph used in this example, also contains a map of the United States showing seasonal “pan” evaporation rates. These rates were obtained from averaging seasonal evaporative losses from small pools of water in various parts of the country during the so-called “evaporative season” of May through October. Because pan evaporation tends to overestimate actual evaporation, these rates are multiplied by a correction factor of 0.7. Returning to Example 1, if the pond in question were located in New York City, a seasonal evaporation rate of 40 inches per 6 months or 5.6 mm/day is predicted. The actual pond evaporation would therefore be $5.6 \times 0.7 = 4 \text{ mm/day}$. This is an average rate, and it should be realized that actual rates for smaller time increments can be significantly higher or lower.

5.4 Inspections

All lined ponds should be inspected on a quarterly basis (at minimum), in addition to after a significant rain or snow event. With respect to the integrity of the liner system, the inspections should include observation of the following:

- Depth and uniformity of cover layers
- Integrity of hard armor system at shoreline
- Presence of deep-rooted vegetation in the cover soil
- Signs of burrowing animals
- Signs of settlement or erosion around weirs, spillways, inlet/outlet pipes
- Current water level in relation to design water level

If the inspection reveals any problems, corrective action should be taken as soon as possible. Especially critical is the need to maintain cover over the liner system. Immediate repairs must be performed if the cover soil/stone is washed away and the liner is exposed. Records should be kept of inspections and any required maintenance.

5.5 Addressing Leaks

If inspections and water balance calculations reveal that unacceptable leakage is occurring, then the following guidelines may be helpful in identifying the source of the problem. If leaks occur immediately upon the initial filling with water, then it is quite likely that there has been an installation-related flaw in the pond. The steady-state water level may, in fact, indicate the location of the leak. In any case, special attention should be focused on all details and terminations. These areas are the most difficult to construct and are therefore the most likely sources of leakage.

If significant leakage does not occur immediately, but does occur within one month of filling the newly constructed pond, then it is likely that water has worked its way into another construction/installation related flaw. The same areas mentioned above should be carefully inspected and repaired as needed.

Finally, if major leakage occurs in the long-term after many months or years of negligible leakage, it is likely that the problem is attributable to longer-term forces such as burrowing animals, root intrusion, or subgrade stability problems. Repairs on these problems are site-specific.

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APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE CALCULATION FOR SLOPE STABILITY

This procedure demonstrates how a mathematical model can be used to assess slope stability for an Akwaseal-lined pond in cases where a simple sliding block analysis is inconclusive. It is not intended to derive or explain the model. Readers are referred to the full text of the source paper for detailed explanations.

The Giroud and Beech stability calculation differs from the simplified “sliding block” model, because it includes consideration of toe buttressing and liner anchorage, both of which contribute to stability. The method does not include pore water (seepage) forces, which can contribute to instability. In a water containment application, seepage forces can occur during rapid drawdown of the water such as might occur in a fire pond application. In ordinary use, however, rapid drawdown is not likely and is not considered herein.

Using this calculation, if the result (α) is negative, then the liner system is not in tension and can be considered stable.

Slope Stability Equation from Giroud and Beech

$$\alpha = \frac{\gamma_c T_c^2}{\sin 2\beta} \left[\left(\frac{2H \cos \beta}{T_c} - 1 \right) \left(\frac{\sin(\beta - \phi_i)}{\cos \phi_i} \right) - \left(\frac{\sin \phi_c}{\cos(\beta + \phi_c)} \right) \right]$$

Where:

- α = Liner tension per unit width
- γ_c = Unit weight of cover material
- T_c = Thickness of cover material
- β = Slope angle, degrees
- H = Slope height
- ϕ^i = Minimum interface friction angle, degrees
- ϕ^c = Internal friction angle of cover material, degrees

And:

$$\tan \phi_m = \frac{\tan \phi_{i,c}}{FS}$$

Where:

- $\tan \phi_m$ = mobilized friction angles, with factor of safety included
- FS = factor of safety (engineer-determined)

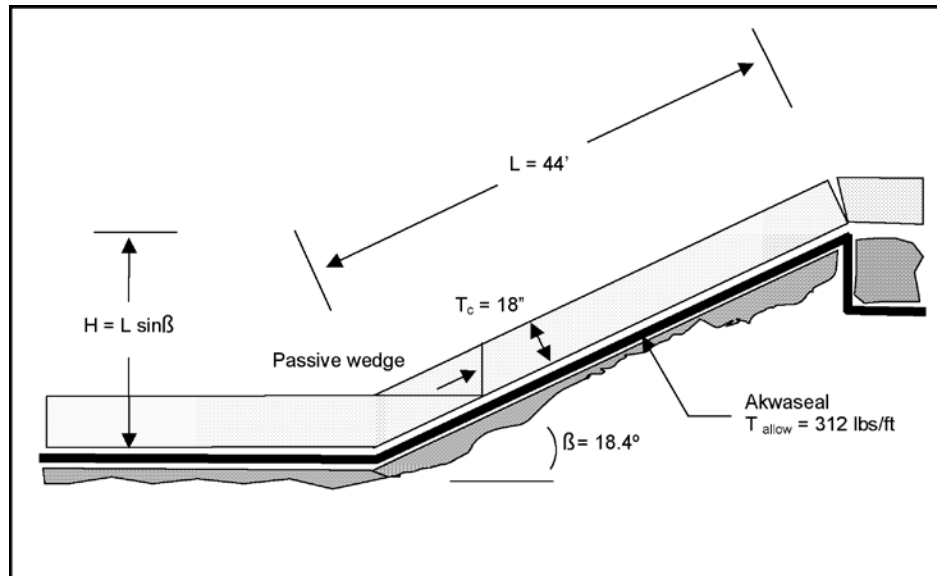
Reference: Giroud, J.P., and J.F. Beech (1989) “Stability of Soil Layers on Geosynthetic Lining Systems,” *Geosynthetics '89*, Industrial Fabrics Association International, pp. 35-46.

If α is positive, then the geosynthetic component of the lining system above the critical interface will be in tension. This is because the driving force cannot be transferred through frictional resistance. If the tension exceeds the allowable amount for this component, failure could occur.

The value for allowable tension is determined by the ultimate tensile strength of the liner, which is reduced by an appropriate percentage to ensure that the liner is not excessively stressed. Assuming Akwaseal is used, existing data indicates that its ultimate strength is 780 lbs/ft (11.4 kN/m). Assuming that the liner will still remain functional in the long term with 40% of this load applied, the “allowable” tensile stress is 312 lbs/ft (4.6 kN/m). If the designer opts to eliminate all tension on the liner, then the analysis is performed to ensure that $\alpha \leq 0$. An example calculation is provided above.

EXAMPLE:

A pond is to be constructed on compacted sand with a 3H:1V interior side slope. There will be 18 inches (450 mm) of sand cover on the Akwaseal (allowable tension = 312 lb/ft or 4.6 kN/m), with the membrane component of the pond liner facing the subgrade. The slope is 44 feet (13.4 m) long. The designer prefers a safety factor of 1.3. Determine if the slope will be stable both in the as-constructed and submerged conditions.



Answer: From Table C-1, the compacted density of the sand cover soil layer can be reasonably estimated as 130 lbs/ft³ (20.42 kN/m³). The friction angle of the sand is assumed to be 30 degrees (24 degrees with FS=1.3). The weakest interface is that between the membrane component of Akwaseal and the sand. For purposes of this calculation, the interface friction value is assumed to be 20 degrees (15.6 degrees with FS=1.3), although site specific tests are always recommended. Finally, with a 3H:1V slope 44 feet (13.4 m) long, it can be calculated that the slope height (H) is 13.9 ft (4.24 m). Using the Giroud and Beech stability equation,

$$\alpha = \frac{(130)(1.5)^2}{\sin 2(18.4)} \left[\left(\frac{2(13.9) \cos(18.4)}{1.5} - 1 \right) \left(\frac{\sin(18.4 - 15.6)}{\cos 15.6} \right) - \left(\frac{\sin 24}{\cos(18.4 + 24)} \right) \right]$$

less than the allowable value, so the slope is stable. To evaluate the submerged state, the buoyant force of water (62.4 lbs/ft³ or 9.8 kN/m³) is subtracted from the unit weight of the soil. When the calculation is repeated, the resulting tension on the liner system $\alpha = 71 \text{ lb/ft}$ (1.0 kN/m) and the slope is still considered stable.

$$\alpha = 136 \text{ lb/ft} \quad (1.98 \text{ kN/m})$$

Had the simple sliding block calculation been performed using these same values, the results would have been:

$$FS = \frac{\tan \phi_c}{\tan \beta} = \frac{\tan 20}{\tan 18.4} = 1.09$$

With a desired factor of safety of 1.3, the simplified analysis would have shown that the slope is not acceptably stable. Thus the modified analysis method can be used to demonstrate stability in cases where the simplified method does not.

Table A-1. Typical Properties of Compacted Soils.

Symbol	Description	Density (lb./ft ³)		Density (kN/m ³)		Friction Angle (deg)
		Min.	Max	Min.	Max	
GW	Well-graded, clean sands, gravel-sand mixtures	125	135	19.64	21.21	>38
GP	Poorly graded clean gravels, gravel-sand mixtures	115	125	18.07	19.64	>37
GM	Silty gravels, poorly graded gravel-sand silt	120	135	18.85	21.21	>34
GC	Clayey gravels, poorly graded gravel-sand-clay	115	130	18.07	20.42	>31
SW	Well-graded clean sands, gravelly sands	110	130	17.28	20.42	38
SP	Poorly graded clean sands, sand-gravel mix	100	120	15.71	18.85	37
SM	Silty sands, poorly graded sand-silt mix	110	125	17.28	19.64	34
SM-MC	Sand-silt-clay mix with slightly plastic fines	110	130	17.28	20.42	33
SC	Clayey sands, poorly graded sand-clay mix	105	125	16.50	19.64	31
ML	Inorganic silts and clayey silts	95	120	14.92	18.85	32
ML-CL	Mixture of organic silt and clay	100	120	15.71	18.85	32
CL	Inorganic clays of low-to-medium plasticity	95	120	14.92	18.85	28
OL	Organic silts and silt-clays, low plasticity	80	100	12.57	15.71	---
MH	Inorganic clayey silts, elastic silts	70	95	11.00	14.92	25
CH	Inorganic clays of high plasticity	75	105	11.78	16.50	19
OH	Organic and silty clays	65	100	10.21	15.71	---

Reference: Construction Planning: Equipment and Methods, 4th Ed.

Table A-2. Slope Conversions.

Ratio (H:V)	Percent	Degrees
0.5:1	70.5	63.4
1:1	50	45.0
1.5:1	37.4	33.7
2:1	29.5	26.6
2.5:1	24.2	21.8
3:1	20.5	18.4
3.5:1	17.7	15.9
4:1	15.6	14.0
5:1	12.6	11.3
6:1	10.6	9.5
7:1	9.0	8.1
8:1	7.9	7.1
9:1	7.0	6.3
10:1	6.3	5.7

APPENDIX B EVAPORATION NOMOGRAPH

Evaporation Nomograph

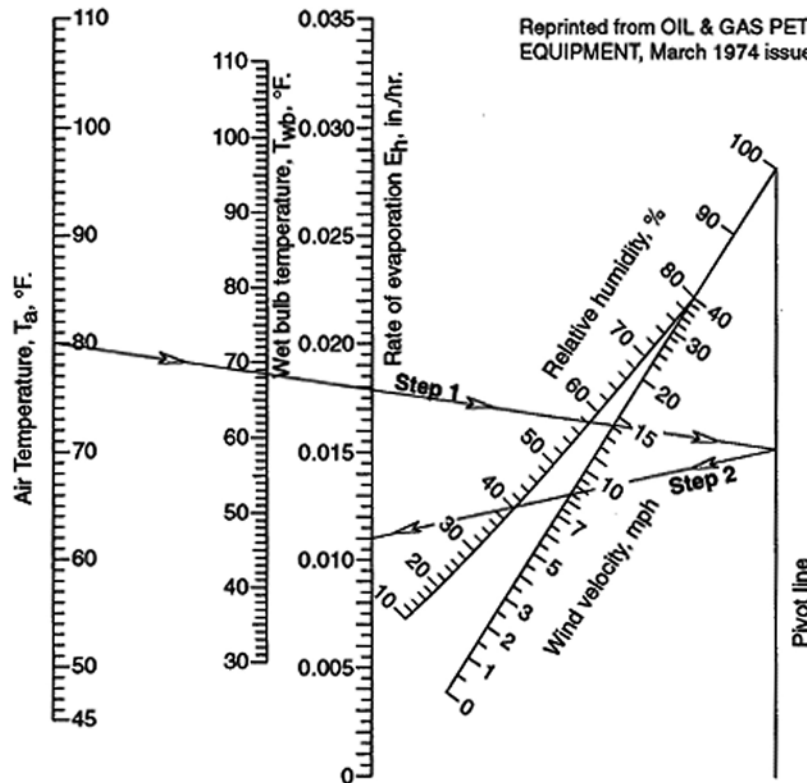
Data on evaporation from lakes and reservoirs are not extensive. But there are formulas by which it may be computed. One of these; by Fitzgerald, has the form, $E_h = (S - F)(1 + v/2)/60$; where E_h = evaporation rate, in./hr.; S = vapor pressure of water at water temperature, in. Hg; F = vapor pressure existing in the air; and v = wind velocity, mph. Wind velocities are at the water surface and may be taken at one-half those recorded at an elevated station such as the Weather Bureau stations. For larger reservoirs, however, Weather Bureau values give results in close agreement with direct measurements.

An alternative and substantially equivalent formula is given by Fitzgerald in more usable terms. Somewhat simplified and transformed; it is: $E_h = 0.0002 (T_a - T_{wb})(1 + v/2)$; where T_a and T_{wb} are the air temperature and wet-bulb

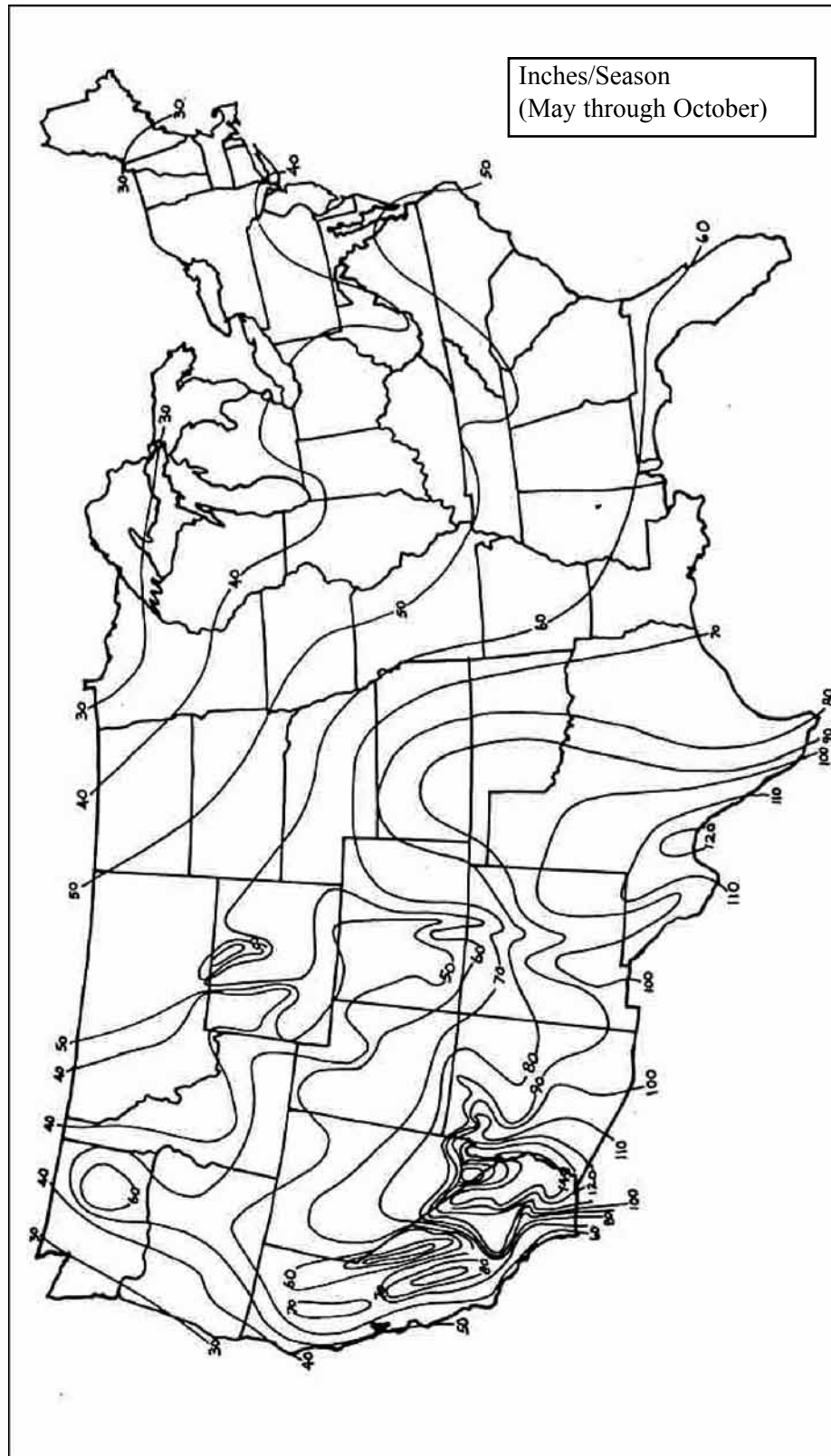
temperature, respectively. The monogram is based on the second formula. It includes the relative humidity for convenience.

Example. Assume the "normal" or long-term monthly temperature, relative humidity, and wind velocity for a certain location are 80° F., 58%, and 8 mph; what is the "normal" wet-bulb temperature, and what is the evaporation rate per hour and per month of 31 days?

Solution. Step 1, line 80°F. on T_a scale with 58% on R scale, extend to Pivot line and mark. Also read wet-bulb temperature as 69°F. where line crossed T_{wb} scale. Step 2, from marked position Pivot line, connect with 8 mph on V scale, extend to E_h scale, and read evaporation rate as 0.011 in./hr. The evaporation rate per month = $0.011 \times 24 \times 31 = 8.184$ in.



PAN EVAPORATION RATES FOR THE UNITED STATES
(Farnsworth, et. al. 1982)



A P P E N D I X C

RAMP DESIGN PROCEDURE

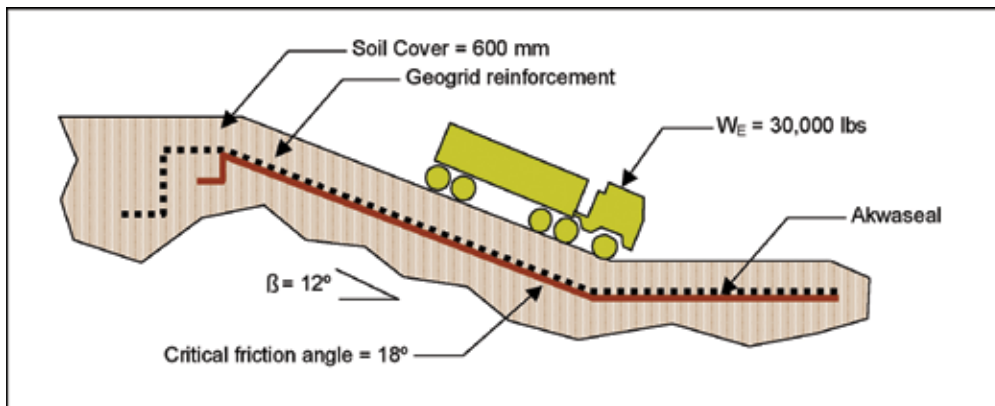
In certain water containment applications, it may be necessary to include a ramp to provide vehicular access to the interior of the pond. Ramps may be needed when earthmoving equipment is used to remove accumulated sludge in a wastewater lagoon or sediment in a sedimentation basin. A ramp may also be included in a decorative pond design in order to provide boat access. In all of these cases, the liner system must be strong enough to support the static and dynamic loads that vehicles will impose on the slopes. This procedure (provided courtesy of Tensar) helps the designer calculate these loads and then determine whether additional reinforcing members are needed to support them.

Example:

A ramp sloping at 12 degrees is constructed leading into a sedimentation basin. The ramp is 10 feet (3 m) wide and 100 feet (30 m) long and is covered with 2 feet (600 mm) of sandy soil at 130 lbs/ft³ (2,082 Kg/m³). How much reinforcement is needed to ensure a factor of safety of 2.0 when a 30,000 lb (13,605 Kg) vehicle is moving down the ramp and applies its brakes? The critical friction angle in the liner system is the membrane component of the Akwaseal against the subgrade, which is 18 degrees. Assume that braking applies a downward force that is 30% of the vehicle weight.

Answer:

As with other stability calculations, it is necessary to calculate the driving forces and resisting forces. The driving forces include the weight of the ramp cover soil (W_R), the weight of the equipment driving on the slope (W_E), and the braking force (F_B). The resisting forces include the frictional resistance between the liner and subgrade and tension on any reinforcing component such as a geogrid.



$$W_R = (100 \text{ ft} \times 10 \text{ ft} \times 2 \text{ ft})(130 \text{ lbs/ft}^3) = 260,000 \text{ lbs}$$

$$W_E = 30,000 \text{ lbs}$$

$$F_B = 0.3 \times W_E = (0.3)(30,000) = 9,000 \text{ lbs}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Frictional resistance} &= F_R = (W_R + W_E) \cos 12^\circ \tan 18^\circ \\ &= (260,000 + 30,000)(0.978)(0.445) = 92,176 \text{ lbs} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Driving forces (static conditions)} &= F_{Ds} = (W_R + W_E) \sin 12^\circ \\ &= (260,000 + 30,000)(0.208) = 60,320 \text{ lbs} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Driving forces (dynamic conditions)} &= F_{Dd} = F_{Ds} + F_B \\ &= 60,320 + 9,000 = 69,320 \text{ lbs} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Factor of safety} = FS = \text{Resisting forces/driving forces}$$

$$\text{Tension required for reinforcement} = T_{\text{req}}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 T_{req} &= FS (F_{Ds} + F_B) - F_R \\
 &= 2 (60,320 + 9,000) - 92,176 = 46,464 \text{ lbs or } 4,646 \text{ lbs/ft ramp width}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$FS = \frac{F_R + T_{req}}{F_{Ds} + F_B}$$

This is the total amount of tension required to be carried by the geogrid reinforcement. As an example, a Tensar UX1700HS geogrid has a long-term allowable tensile strength of 5,140 lbs/ft in sand. Therefore, this ramp would be stable with an $FS > 2.0$ using a Tensar UX1700HS geogrid placed on the liner, with the 2 feet of cover soil backfill placed over the geogrid.

It should be noted that the factor of safety without the geogrid is 1.5. This is because the critical friction angle is greater than the slope angle. This implies stability although perhaps not with a sufficient degree of conservatism as would be warranted in a ramp design.

A P P E N D I X D

POND LINER DESIGN CHECKLIST

OUTCOME (Check One)			
CHECKLIST ITEM	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Not Applicable
UNIVERSAL DESIGN PARAMETERS:			
Site selection			
Groundwater level is below bottom of pond			
Subgrade soils can be compacted and smoothed			
Soil is not excessively rocky			
Trees and roots can be removed			
Soil has adequate bearing capacity			
Slope Stability			
Design slopes do not exceed 4H:1V			
Design calculations indicate stability			
Slope lengths do not exceed those listed in Table 2-3			
Hydraulic Performance			
Akwaseal flux rate meets project requirements			
Evaporative losses evaluated			
Pond will contain fresh water only			
Pond will not contain high levels of contaminants			
APPLICATION-SPECIFIC DESIGN PARAMETERS			
Details for inlet/outlet structures are complete			
Details for terminations are complete			
Indicator layer planned for sediment removal			
Hard armor system designed for shoreline			
Rapid drawdown issues considered			
Groundwater elevation considered			
Hydrostatic uplift potential evaluated			
Entry/exit ramps designed			
Pond perimeter favorable for easy access			
INSTALLATION-RELATED DESIGN PARAMETERS			
Suitable handling equipment available			
Contractor aware of need to protect liner			
Unloading and storage conditions recognized			
Subgrade prepared to receive liner			
Runout and anchor trench with proper dimensions			
Suitable quality and quantity of cover soil available			

NOTE:

This checklist is merely a guideline for the designer's convenience and is not intended as a replacement for a project-specific design.

A P P E N D I X E

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING THE CONDITION OF HYDRATED LINER

It is often asked whether “premature hydration” affects Akwaseal to the extent where it should be “removed and replaced”. The term “premature” is used because excessive hydration is only a concern when the liner is uncovered. Once a modest confining cover (12 inches of soil) is applied over the liner, the bentonite cannot exert enough swelling force to delaminate the product, nor can it absorb enough water to become overly plastic. A few years ago, specifiers began to include provisions requiring the removal and replacement of all liner that was hydrated before being covered. However, this “remove and replace” practice is not always necessary.

Akwaseal is needlepunched, meaning that it is held together with needlepunched fibers. The needlepunched construction of Akwaseal provides a mechanical bond that cannot be overcome by the swelling bentonite. In other words, Akwaseal can withstand unconfined hydration without losing its integrity. This is why Akwaseal can be successfully deployed even in standing water for short periods without adverse impacts. However, this does not mean that CETCO recommends such installation practices. CETCO advises that these instances be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For example, the duration that the material was exposed, the degree of its hydration, the location of Akwaseal within the liner system, and the bearing loads it will be subjected to during construction are all factored into a recommendation.

When assessing whether to remove and replace any prematurely hydrated Akwaseal, an examination of the hydrated areas should be conducted in order to verify that:

1. The geotextiles have not been separated, torn, or otherwise damaged.
2. There is no evidence that the needlepunching between the geotextiles has been compromised.
3. The Akwaseal does not leave deep indentations when it is walked upon.
4. The overlapped and bentonite-enhanced seams are intact.

If these conditions are met, then Akwaseal probably may remain in place. Although it may contain more water than it would have under soil or geosynthetic cover, this water will be drained from the pond liner when consolidation occurs as normal loads are applied. The end result will be a water content in the formerly unconfined areas that is equivalent to that in the confined areas. Even if Akwaseal is hydrated to the extent that bentonite is displaced under foot, it may be possible to allow the material to air-dry such that bentonite is no longer displaced by point load. This is why it is not necessary to specify an absolute numerical moisture content criterion to decide whether to remove and replace Akwaseal. Again, removal and replacement would not be necessary, provided there is no visible evidence of damage.

Premature hydration is an extremely common occurrence, and Akwaseal was designed to sustain it without requiring removal and replacement. CETCO has seen that such cases are a rare exception and occur only as a result of prolonged hydration followed by direct vehicular contact. For this reason, CETCO estimates that over 99% of prematurely hydrated Akwaseal does not require removal.



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