

Material Source FAQ's

Questions and Answers

What is the definition of a Material Source?

A unique parcel or combination of parcels of land which are ODOT owned or controlled specifically identified as the location from which material can be removed for utilization in the construction of a project and the continued maintenance of the project. Material can either be in place naturally occurring earthen material or earthen material which has been transported to this location from another site or sites and stockpiled for future use. Material from this source may or may not require secondary processing prior to incorporation into the project.



What do we do?

The purpose of the ODOT Material Source Program is to proactively and aggressively manage the ODOT Material Source Network. The program is re-positioned based on law and rule changes. ODOT works with regulatory agencies to keep ODOT sources viable through the changing regulations. The program goal is to have long term, strategically located sources of high quality materials which are permitted, environmentally cleared and ready for use in emergency and on construction and maintenance projects.

We accomplish this goal through effective Asset Management of these very valuable resource properties. ODOT sources are inventoried and evaluated to determine where the properties are, what volume and quality of material is available and what environmental concerns there may be. When a key site is identified, ODOT works proactively toward permitting and protection of previously un-permitted sources or on maintaining permits and protection for existing sources.

What is the ODOT Material Source Network?

Aggregate material is a generic term used for any earthen material that "adds Bulk" to a construction project. Crushed rock, sand, and gravel are common types of aggregate. ODOT has a complex network of borrow sources, cinder sources and of hard rock or gravel from which aggregate products are derived. Most of ODOT's owned and controlled material sites are located along highway corridors or in close proximity to them. Though each site is a separate tax lot with a distinct legal description they are all related. They are strategically located along the highway systems, forming a network of sites from which ODOT can obtain needed materials. This complex network serves four primary functions: cost-effective source of materials, 24 hour access for emergency response, reliable supply of quality material for maintenance and construction, and minimization of environmental impacts.

This network of material sites is important for reasons other than extraction. Often times in emergency situation as well as during routine maintenance operations, ODOT has the need to remove material from the highway system. For example during rockfall, debris flow and slide events, as well as during routine ditch cleaning work, material needs to be removed from the highway and either stockpiled or disposed of in environmentally cleared locations. In many cases ODOT material sources serve as these disposal locations.

Why does ODOT own or control material sources?

ODOT is a major consumer of aggregate products. On average ODOT has a demand for between 4 and 8 million tons of aggregate material per year to meet the needs of construction and maintenance projects around the state. Demand varies per year based on the types of projects and on the project schedules. ODOT owns approximately 700 material sites around the state which in combination with federal sites, private and commercial suppliers are relied upon to supply the materials needed for the numerous ODOT construction projects.

In some areas of the state, there are no commercial or private sources of materials within miles of the highway projects. Without state owned or controlled sources of material contractors would have no alternative but to haul materials needed for the project from distant sources adding substantial cost to the projects. In other areas where there are few commercial or private sources the existence of a publicly controlled or owned material source can provide an option for contractors who do not control their own source of materials and who are interested in bidding on the ODOT project.

Who is responsible for permitting material sources in Oregon?

There are numerous state and county agencies that are involved in the permitting of material sources in the State of Oregon. Where the site is located and depending on the ownership of the property, will determine what agencies and operator will be required to work with in their effort to obtain necessary permits.

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) is the primary agency responsible for permitting of material sources at the state level. The exception is when sources are located within the bend and banks of Oregon waterways in which case the Division of State Lands coupled with the Army Corps of Engineers takes authority.

In addition to these agencies, if sites are located on either private land or non-federal publicly owned lands, the local county planning departments will also be involved in the permitting of a material source through the local land use process.

Other state agencies may also become involved in the permitting of a material source depending on the location of the site, such as the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) if the site is located along one of the numerous State Scenic Waterways. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) may also become involved in the permitting of material sources if there will be storm water runoff from the site or if various types of industrial activities will be taking place on the site.

Does ODOT have to permit the material sources that it owns and operates?

Yes, ODOT is required to obtain all of the same permits that a private operator would be required to obtain from the various state and local agencies involved in the permitting of material sources.

Is ODOT exempt from obtaining environmental clearances for material sources?

No, ODOT is required to obtain all necessary environmental clearances on our material source properties. In the environmental arena ODOT is actually held to a higher standard than many of the private and commercial operators due to federal financial participation on many of the ODOT projects. Due to the federal funding, ODOT is required to obtain clearances that meet the federal National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) guidelines which are much more rigorous than those required by the State of Oregon.

How does a private party who has a material source get it recognized by ODOT?

ODOT maintains a database of material sources that have been recognized by ODOT. To obtain a state source number and to have the source entered into the ODOT database, the owner or controller simply needs to contact one of the Material Source Program representatives. The representative will be able supply the interested party with some very simple forms requesting basic information on location, ownership, and type of material. Upon receiving the completed forms the Material Source Program representative will be able to input the data into the system and issue the owner or controller a unique ODOT source number.