

# StormTech Isolator Row



The StormTech Isolator Row is an effective filtration/infiltration system best suited to locations where space is at a premium and the system's relatively expensive installation cost can be offset by increasing available space for development.

## About the StormTech Isolator Row

The StormTech Isolator Row is a manufactured system designed to provide subsurface water quality treatment and easy access for maintenance. It is typically used to remove pollution from runoff before it flows into unlined infiltration chambers designed for detention and water quantity control. The Isolator Row consists of a series of StormTech chambers installed over a layer of woven geotextile, which sits on a crushed stone infiltration bed surrounded with filter fabric. The bed is directly connected to an upstream manhole for maintenance access and large storm bypass. At UNHSC, the Isolator Row has met a TSS median annual removal standard of 80 percent, and exhibited an enhanced capacity to remove phosphorus. The Isolator Row is well suited for urban environments where space is at a premium.

## Implementation

The StormTech Isolator Row is part of a class of manufactured, subsurface filtration/infiltration systems that are being used more and more throughout the United States. In general, these systems are best suited to locations where above ground space is at a premium. They are often used in urban areas, where they are located beneath parking lots and other

infrastructure. As with any infiltration system, care must be taken when locating these systems near pollution hotspots, or where seasonal high groundwater levels may lead to groundwater contamination. In such cases, if installed, the systems should be lined to prevent infiltration into groundwater, and outfitted with subdrains that discharge to the surface. Designs for the StormTech Isolator Row are available from the manufacturer.

## System Performance

### Cost & Maintenance

While subsurface HDPE systems such as the Isolator Row tend to be more expensive than conventional stormwater treatments like retention ponds, the costs are ameliorated by the increase in available space for development. The cost to install a StormTech Isolator Row system large enough to treat runoff from one acre of impervious surface was \$34,000 in 2006.

In more than two years of operation, the system is at less than 50 percent of its recommended maintenance trigger point. Maintenance should be conducted when the sediment in the chambers reaches approximately three inches in depth according to recommendations from the manufacturer. Sediment accumulation can be monitored through inspection ports. When maintenance is needed, the entire row can be

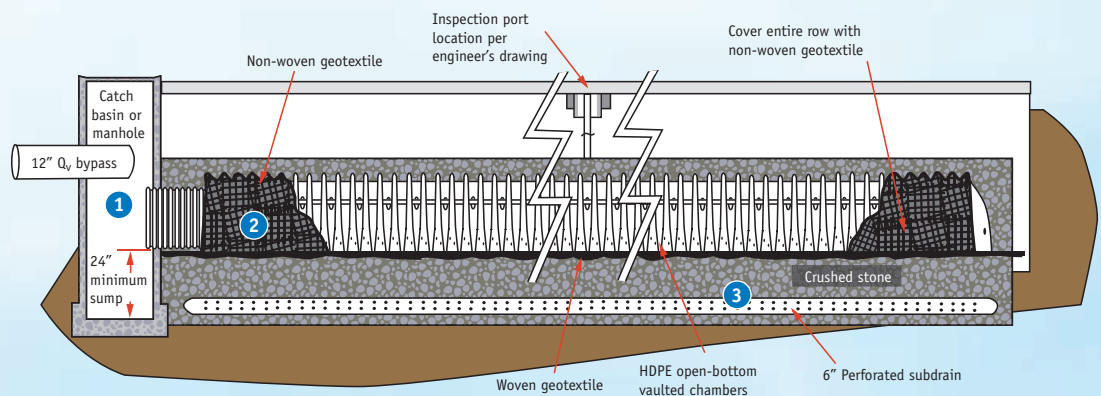
CATEGORY / BMP TYPE	Water Quality: Physical (Sedimentation, Filtration) & Chemical (Sorption)	SPECIFICATIONS	MAINTENANCE
Filtration, Infiltration, Manufactured Treatment Device		Catchment Area: 1 acre	Maintenance Sensitivity: Low
UNIT OPERATIONS & PROCESSES	DESIGN SOURCE: StormTech, LLC	Water Quality Flow: 1 cfs	Inspections: High
Hydrologic (Flow Alteration)	BASIC DIMENSIONS Chamber: 51" wide X 30" high X 85.4" long	Water Quality Volume: 3,300 cf	Sediment Removal: Moderate
		INSTALLATION COST \$34,000 per acre treated	

Fast Facts

## How the System Works

## WATER QUALITY TREATMENT PROCESS ▼

1. Runoff flows into the Isolator Row chambers from a catchbasin or pipe.
2. Runoff slowly passes from the chambers through a woven geotextile fabric and into the crushed stone reservoir below the system. The runoff passes through the fabric, leaving behind sediments and associated contaminants through the physical unit operations of filtration and sedimentation. As an organic filter cake develops over the fabric, phosphorus is also removed via the chemical process of sorption.
3. Filtered runoff collects in a perforated subdrain and returns to a storm drain system, infiltrates into the subgrade, or is discharged to the surface.



washed clean through an access manhole and by a hydro-jet with sediment removed by vactoring (vacuuming). Entry into the system is considered a confined space entry and requires trained personnel and equipment.

During two years of evaluation at UNHSC, the Isolator Row has accumulated, at most, one and one half inches of sediment in its chambers. As a result, researchers have not performed maintenance on the system. The Isolator Row presents an interesting opportunity to study the relationship between maintenance and performance. Researchers have observed enhanced phosphorus removal as the system develops an organic filter cake between the chambers and the woven geotextile fabric that lies beneath them. This enhancement is tempered by the likelihood that, as the filter cake continues to grow, hydraulic efficiency will decline and more runoff will bypass the system untreated until maintenance is performed. Analyses are underway to develop maintenance recommendations that balance and optimize the water quality and water quantity management abilities of this system.

### Cold Climate

This system's water quality treatment and volume control capacity remained strong in all seasons, reinforcing the conclusion that filtration and infiltration systems perform well, even in cold climates.

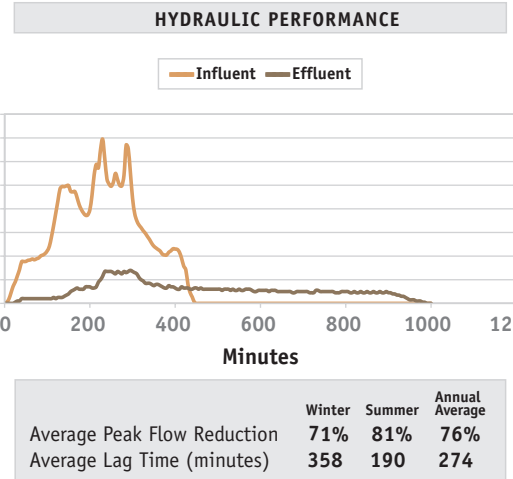
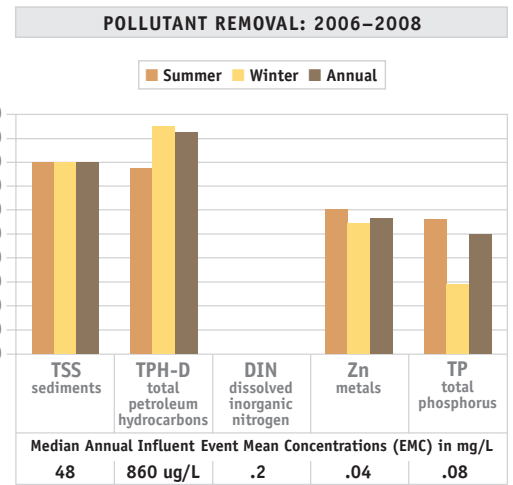
### Water Quality Treatment

The StormTech Isolator Row system does a good job of reducing the concentration of common pollutants associated with stormwater performance assessment with the exception of nitrogen. It generally meets EPA's recommended level of removal for total suspended solids, and meets regional ambient water quality criteria for heavy metals and petroleum hydrocarbons. The system has a capacity to achieve modest levels of total phosphorus removal, which may be enhanced over time. (See Cost & Maintenance Section.) The lack of nitrogen treatment is typical for non-vegetated aerobic systems. Nutrient load reduction would be further increased through volume reduction by infiltration. Like all other systems monitored at UNHSC, it does not provide chloride removal.

The chart at top right reflects the system's performance in removing total suspended solids, total petroleum hydrocarbons, dissolved inorganic nitrogen, total phosphorus, and zinc. Values represent results recorded over a two-year monitoring period, with the data further divided into summer and winter components.

### Water Quantity Control

Like other infiltration and filtration systems, the StormTech Isolator Row system exhibits the capacity to reduce peak flows and could be used to reduce runoff volume in appropriate soils, such as those belonging to groups "A" or "B." The figure at bottom right provides information on peak flow reduction and lag times for the system.



## SYSTEM DESIGN ▼

The StormTech Isolator Row is designed to provide subsurface water quality treatment for small storms. The manufacturer adapts the system's design in accordance with local watershed conditions and target treatment objectives.

Chamber units are made of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe and are designed to bear loads consistent with those experienced by parking lots. The UNHSC chamber dimensions are 51 x 30 x 85.4 inches and can be linked together to form linear rows up to 200 feet long. The chambers are laid over woven geotextile, which rests on an infiltration base composed of one foot of three quarter inch crushed stone. The entire excavation is then wrapped in nonwoven geotextile to protect the system from the migration of fine particles from the surrounding soil.

A three- to five-foot separation from seasonal high groundwater table (as designated by regulations) is necessary to minimize the potential for groundwater contamination. Stormwater flows of

up to one cubic foot per second (cfs) enter the system through an upstream manhole or other flow diverter. This is representative of flow-based sizing of a BMP common for devices that have limited detention or storage. Such devices are often better described by a maximum treatable flow rate as opposed to a treatment volume.

A bypass is incorporated in the StormTech system where flows exceeding the design rate are bypassed around the device and flow directly into adjacent chambers that can be sized to treat the  $C_p$  and  $Q_p$ . Because of the bypass design, maintenance requirements are extremely important. A poorly maintained device would bypass prematurely into the unlined chamber systems and eventually clog subsurface soils resulting in system failure.