

**Date:** May 8, 2013

**To:** Urban Stormwater Workgroup

**From:** Tom Schueler, Workgroup Coordinator  
Cecilia Lane, Chesapeake Stormwater Network

**Re:** Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Recently Approved Urban BMPs

At the recent urban BMP webcast, the work group got a lot of feedback from the user community about the critical need to develop a companion document to the expert panel reports that clarifies how the practices will be credited, identifies who the state stormwater contacts are, outlines the reporting and tracking requirements for NEIN and Scenario Builder, corrects errata, and provides any state-specific decisions/interpretations on how the reports are to be properly used.

This draft FAQ document focuses on the retrofit and performance standards expert panel reports that were approved last Fall. Similar FAQ documents will be produced for other expert panel reports in the future, as needed. Once the documents are reviewed and approved by the USWG, they will be posted on the CBP website to provide guidance for the user community.

**Action:** We are requesting feedback from the workgroup on the draft FAQ document on the draft question responses, with the goal of producing a final document for work group approval by the end of the summer.

States are specifically requested to make sure the answers to the questions are consistent with their current policies, and if not, provide a state-specific interpretation or clarification for users in their state. All work group members are asked to add any questions that they have been asked about the report that they cannot answer.

## ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

### ***Questions About the Adjustor Curves***

**Q1:** When will the curves be updated in CAST/MAST/VAST and Scenario Builder?  
*Olivia in Annapolis*

**A:** The CBPO modeling team is currently working to integrate the curves into its BMP planning tools (CAST et al) and its BMP reporting tool (i.e., Scenario Builder) with the goal of an update by the end of Summer 2013.

**Q2:** Which curve do I use if my project uses a mix of ST and RR practices?  
*Joe from Harrisburg*

**A:** Unless your state stormwater contact indicates otherwise, just go ahead and use the curve for the type of practice (ST or RR) that comprise the majority of the runoff capture volume for the project site as a whole.

**Q3:** I have a hard time reading the curves...can you provide us the actual equations for the curves so we can plug them into a spreadsheet to calculate the removal rates? *Jason from Arlington*

**A:** Yes, you can use the following polynomial equations, and enter the number of inches treated per impervious acre (X) by your retrofit or stormwater practice to get the percent removal for each of the three pollutants.

<b>TP</b>	RR	$y = 0.0304x^5 - 0.2619x^4 + 0.9161x^3 - 1.6837x^2 + 1.7072x - 0.0091$
	ST	$y = 0.0239x^5 - 0.2058x^4 + 0.7198x^3 - 1.3229x^2 + 1.3414x - 0.0072$
<b>TN</b>	RR	$y = 0.0308x^5 - 0.2562x^4 + 0.8634x^3 - 1.5285x^2 + 1.501x - 0.013$
	ST	$y = 0.0152x^5 - 0.131x^4 + 0.4581x^3 - 0.8418x^2 + 0.8536x - 0.0046$
<b>TSS</b>	RR	$y = 0.0326x^5 - 0.2806x^4 + 0.9816x^3 - 1.8039x^2 + 1.8292x - 0.0098$
	ST	$y = 0.0304x^5 - 0.2619x^4 + 0.9161x^3 - 1.6837x^2 + 1.7072x - 0.0091$

**Q4:** Can you show me the technical basis for how the adjustor curves were derived?  
*Bill from Richmond*

**A:** The expert panels reviewed a wide range of performance studies to define the runoff reduction and pollutant concentrations changes associated with groups of common stormwater practices. In addition, they crafted a technical appendix that outlines how the performance data was used to derive the curves. See Appendix A/B (retrofit report) or Appendix B/C (performance standards report).

**Q5:** I am using a treatment train of multiple structural and non-structural practices on my project site...do I need to use the curves for each one? *Josh from DC*

**A:** No, you only need to determine the depth of runoff treated per impervious acre for the site as a whole by all of your practices and compute a single removal rate for each pollutant. If your site has a mix of ST and RR practices, see answer to question 2

### ***Questions about Stormwater Practice Classification***

**Q6:** What do I do if I am using a practice in my state design manual that is not contained in the ST/RR Classification Table ? (Table 4 in the performance standards report and Table 2 in the retrofit report) *Scott in Williamsburg*

**A:** The panel tried to ensure that all of BMPs referenced in the seven different state BMP stormwater design manuals were classified as being ST or RR, but a few may have been missed. Check with your state stormwater contact to see how they classify practices not included in the classification table from either memo.

**Q7:** How come dry ponds and dry extended detention ponds are not included in the RR/ST classification table ? *Steve from Baltimore County*

**A:** Both expert panels concluded these two practices had such limited pollutant removal capability that they could not be reliably used for either curve. Most Bay states are discouraging or prohibiting them for new development projects. If your project relies on either practice, used the original CBP-approved lower rate for these practices contained in Table A-5 (retrofit report) or Table B-5 (performance standards report). These older practices are often good candidates for retrofit conversion.

**Q8:** I heard that regenerative stormwater conveyance projects may be considered as a retrofit or a new stormwater practice, but I can't find them in the BMP classification table...what gives? *Joe from Baltimore*

**A:** The stream restoration panel decided, and the other panels concurred, that dry-channel regenerative stormwater conveyance projects could be treated as an upland BMP to treat runoff from new development projects or as a new retrofit to treat existing development. In both cases, the removal rate is determined by using the RR curve for the depth of runoff treated per impervious acre.

**Q9:** How would I deal with an innovative stormwater practice that is not contained in my state design manual and/or the BMP classification table, like a floating treatment wetland? *David from Hampton Roads*

**A:** In general, pollutant removal protocols for innovative stormwater practices will be developed by future expert panels, based on the priority assigned by the Urban

Stormwater Workgroup. An expert panel on floating treatment wetlands will be launched in the summer of 2013.

In general, it is the policy of the work group not to review proprietary practices, unless they can be classified within a broader treatment class. If your state has approved a proprietary practice, check with your state stormwater contact to see if or how it would be credited as a RR or ST practice.

**Q10:** How do I deal with my historic BMPs that were reported under the old CBP removal rates? *Matt from College Park*

**A:** When dealing with older BMPs that were reported using the unit removal rates contained in Table A-5 (retrofit report) or Table B-5 (performance standards report), localities have two options:

1. Keep the rates and then inspect and verify the BMP in the next permit cycle, or
2. Re-compute the removal rates using the adjustor curves and substitute the new rates for the old rates for each individual stormwater practice, based on its current capacity and drainage area.

**Q11:** What is meant by a non-conforming project and how do I compute removal rates for them? *Ben from Binghamton*

**A:** Non-conforming projects include new development or redevelopment projects installed after 2011 that are:

- Designed under old state stormwater performance standards due to grandfathering provisions, gradual rollout of new standards, waivers or delayed local adoption of stormwater ordinances or review procedures, or
- Designed under the new state stormwater standards, but only partially meet them due to site constraints, waivers, exemptions, etc. AND are not mitigated by an acceptable stormwater offset

If a development project is served by a single BMP that can be classified under an existing CBP-approved BMP category, then use the appropriate existing removal rate.

If the project is served by multiple BMPs, determine the runoff treatment volume per impervious acre and whether the BMPs achieve RR or ST, and enter the appropriate removal rate from the curves.

## Questions About BMP Reporting and Tracking

**Q12:** What is the process for reporting BMP data to the state and what happens to it after that? *Randy from Dover*

**A:** Localities report their BMP implementation each year in their annual MS4 permit report submitted to their state stormwater NPDES agency, in a format approved by the state. The state then enters the BMP data into NEIEN which is used as a geographic data hub, which in turn sends it to Scenario Builder to calculate the load generated by the development project for the river basin segment in which the BMP resides and then computes the load reduction based on the appropriate curves for the type of practice it is. The output from Scenario Builder is then used as a direct input to the Chesapeake Bay watershed model, as shown below:

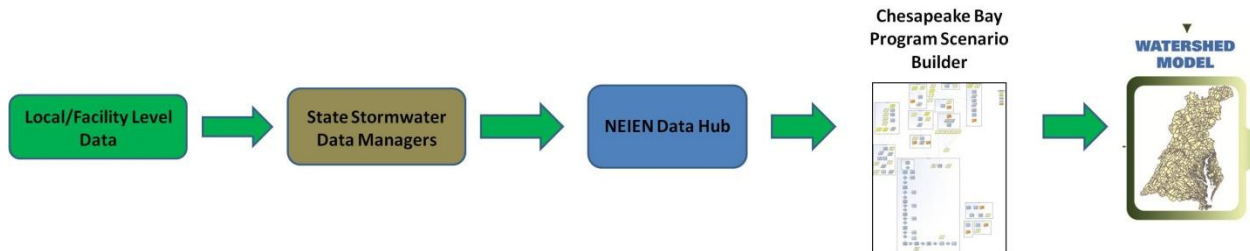


Figure 1. State Stormwater Data Flow Chart (M. Johnston, CBPO, 2013).

Most states will then let their MS4 know how much aggregate load reduction they have achieved from urban BMP projects during that reporting period. Of course, localities can make their own "un-official" load reduction calculations as well, but the decision was made to have states compute the "official" load reductions for the purposes of efficiency and quality control.

**Q14:** I am not subject to a MS4 permit, so who do I send BMP data to? *Willy, from Shakers Township*

**A:** Check with your state stormwater contact and/or data manager.

**Q15:** Who are they? *Willy, again*

**A:** See Table 1 for a current list of these individuals in your state

## USWG Draft of Frequently Asked Questions About Urban BMPs

<b>Table 1. Bay State Stormwater Contacts</b>				
<b>State</b>	<b>Stormwater Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Data Manager</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>DC</b>	Jeff Seltzer	<a href="mailto:jeffrey.seltzer@dc.gov">jeffrey.seltzer@dc.gov</a>	Steve Saari	<a href="mailto:steve.saari@dc.gov">steve.saari@dc.gov</a>
<b>DE</b>	Randy Greer	<a href="mailto:Randell.Greer@state.de.us">Randell.Greer@state.de.us</a>	Jennifer Walls	<a href="mailto:Jennifer.Walls@state.de.us">Jennifer.Walls@state.de.us</a>
<b>MD</b>	Ray Bahr	<a href="mailto:rbahr@mde.state.md.us">rbahr@mde.state.md.us</a>	Greg Sandi	<a href="mailto:gsandi@mde.state.md.us">gsandi@mde.state.md.us</a>
<b>NY</b>	Robert Capowski	<a href="mailto:rmcapows@gw.dec.state.ny.us">rmcapows@gw.dec.state.ny.us</a>	Ben Sears	<a href="mailto:brsears@gw.dec.state.ny.us">brsears@gw.dec.state.ny.us</a>
<b>PA</b>	Ken Murin	<a href="mailto:kmurin@state.pa.us">kmurin@state.pa.us</a>	Ted Tessler	<a href="mailto:thtesler@state.pa.us">thtesler@state.pa.us</a>
<b>VA</b>	Ginny Snead	<a href="mailto:Virginia.Snead@dc.virginia.gov">Virginia.Snead@dc.virginia.gov</a>	Bill Keeling	<a href="mailto:william.keeling@dc.virginia.gov">william.keeling@dc.virginia.gov</a>
<b>WV</b>	Sherry Wilkins	<a href="mailto:Sherry.L.Wilkins@wv.gov">Sherry.L.Wilkins@wv.gov</a>	Alana Hartman	<a href="mailto:alana.c.hartman@wv.gov">alana.c.hartman@wv.gov</a>
<b>Note to States: Please review the above information and revise or confirm.</b>				

**Q16:** What urban BMP information do I need to report to get my reduction credit?  
*Matt from Fairfax County*

**A:** Check with your state stormwater contacts to find the exact data and units to report and the format or reporting tool to use. A summary of recommended reporting requirements for new development, redevelopment and non-conforming projects are shown in the flow charts below. Similar flow charts indicate the data to report for the various classes of stormwater retrofits.

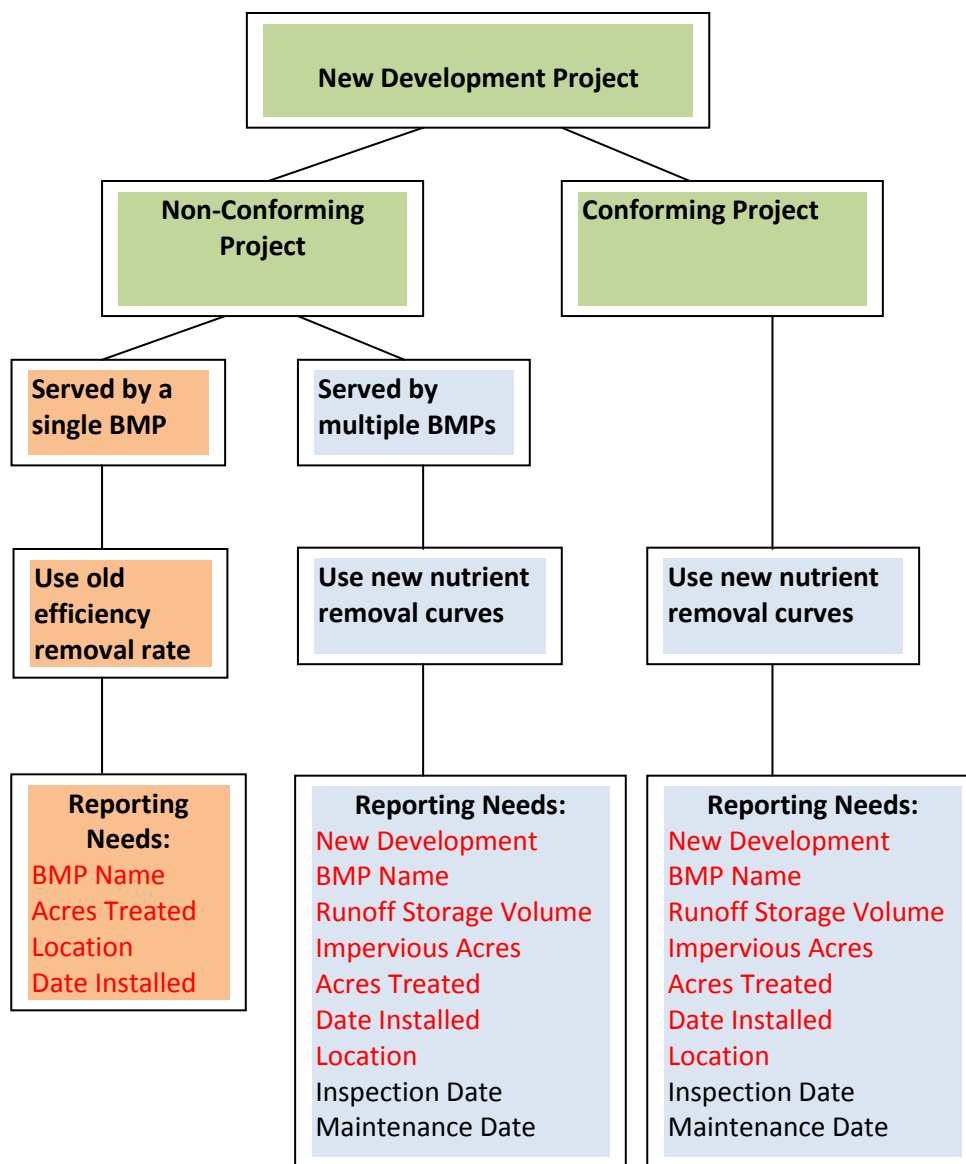


Figure 2. Flow Chart of Reporting Requirements for Conforming and Nonconforming New Development Projects (M. Johnston, CBPO, 2013).

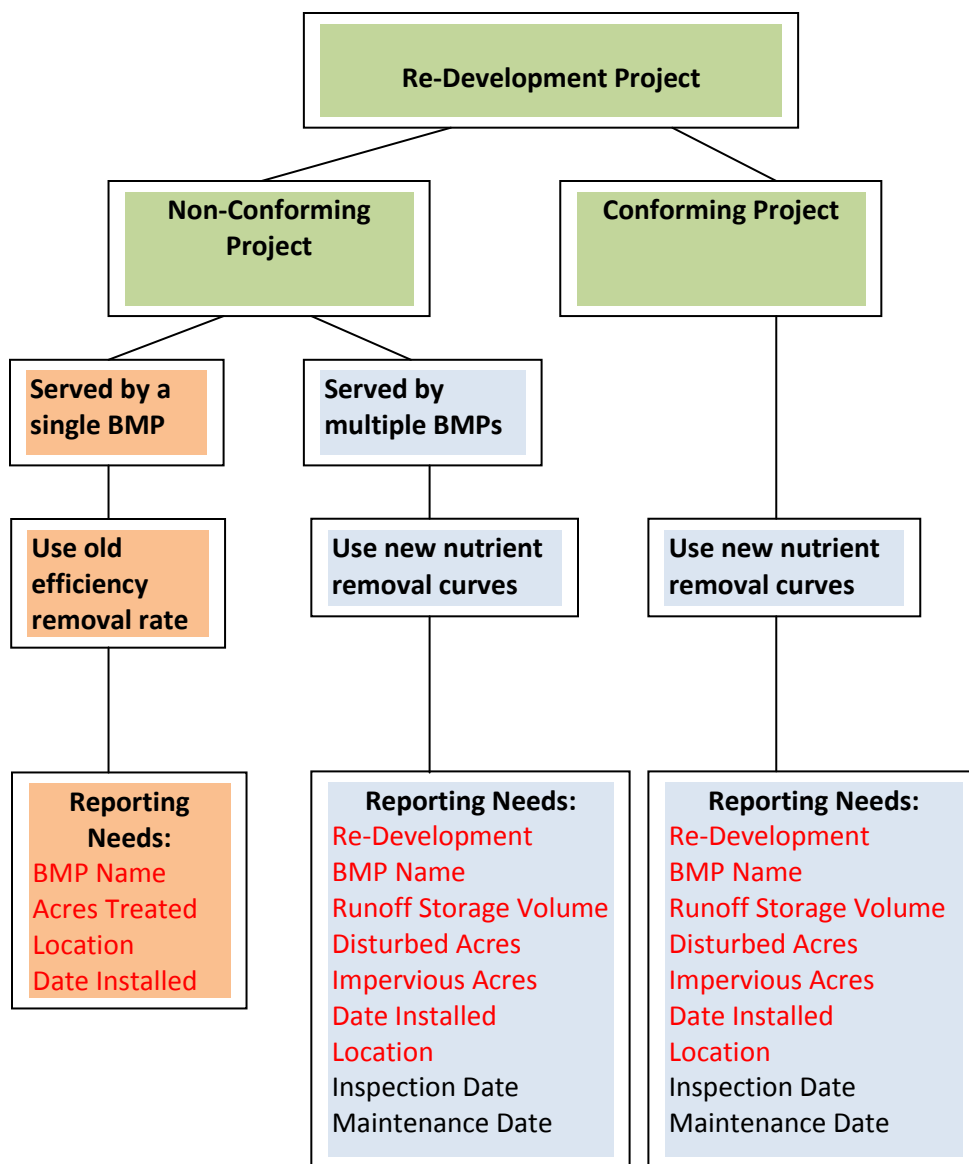


Figure 3. Flow Chart of Reporting Requirements for Conforming and Nonconforming Redevelopment Projects (M. Johnston, CBPO, 2013).



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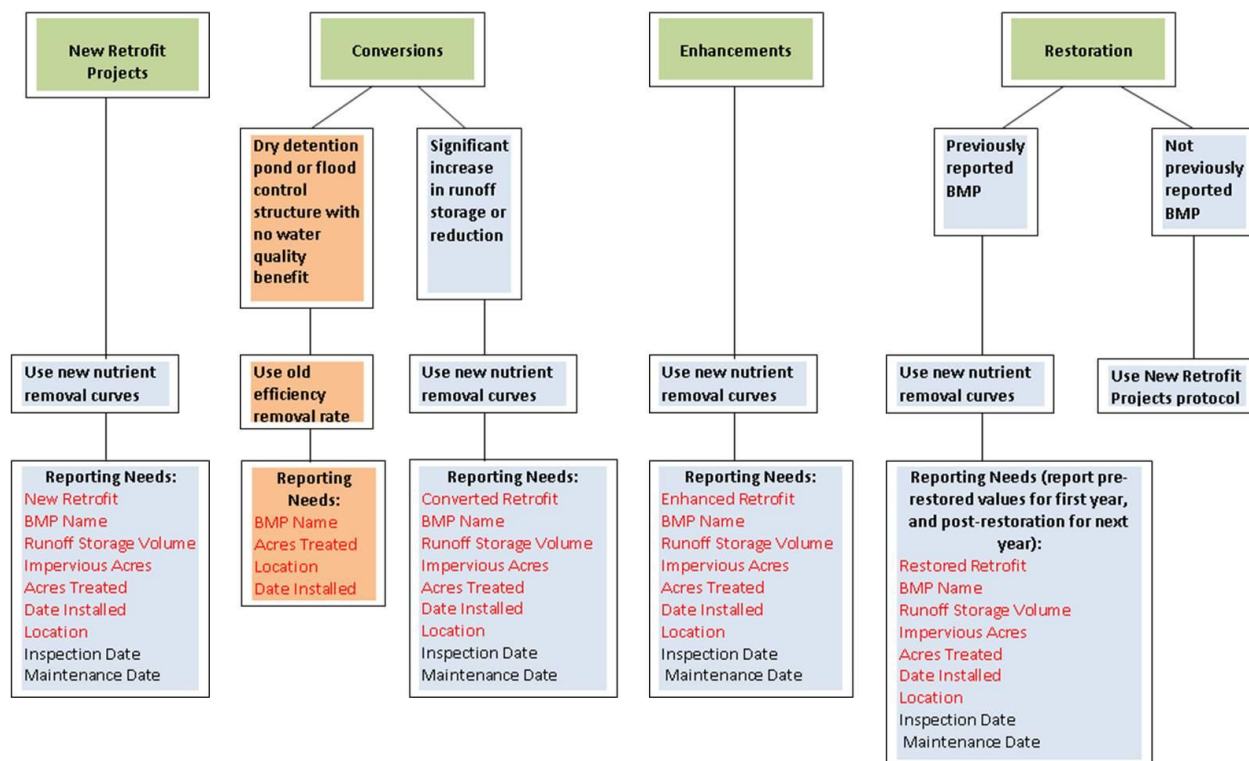


Figure 4. Flow Chart of Reporting Requirements for Retrofit Projects (M. Johnston, CBPO, 2013).

**Q17:** What happens if I don't provide all the BMP information required by the state stormwater reporting agency? *Norm in Falls Church*

**A:** You won't get any credit toward your load allocation in the TMDL.

### Questions on Urban BMP verification

**Q18:** How long are the removal rates good for? *Sherry from Sheperdstown*

**A:** The maximum duration for the removal rate will be 10 years and can be renewed based on a field performance verification. The one exception is for on-site retrofits which have a credit duration of 5 years

**Q19:** What constitutes a field performance inspection? *Ken from Lancaster*

**A:** Each Bay states will developing protocols for verification in the next year that will follow the Chesapeake Bay Program's Urban BMP Verification Protocols that were approved by the Urban Stormwater Workgroup in December 2012. Can be accessed here: <http://chesapeakestormwater.net/bay-stormwater/baywide-stormwater-policy/urban-stormwater-workgroup/>

**Q20:** When will the field visual indicators be developed to assess whether an urban BMP is still performing so that the reduction credit can be renewed? *Bill from Baltimore*

**A:** Good question, Bill

***Specific Questions on the Performance Standards Report***

**Q21:** Can a locality report an Engineering Parameter that is above and beyond the requirements of the respective state? *Mary from St Mary's*

**A:** The curves allow greater pollutant removal rates for projects that treat runoff greater than the state standard.

**Q22:** Does the CBP method supersede my state's stormwater calculations? *Lee Anne from LaPlata*

**A:** No, several of the Bay states require slightly different site-based spreadsheet pollutant load calculations as part of the development review and will continue to do so.

**Q23:** What about impervious cover that is treated under older, less stringent stormwater regulations but that doesn't meet current regulations? *Henry from Henrico*

**A:** Stormwater practices that are constructed to treat untreated impervious cover are considered retrofits and users can determine pollutant removal efficiencies for such practices from the retrofit expert panel recommendations.

**Q24:** My state design manual provides for different levels of runoff reduction and pollutant removal for meeting basic and enhanced BMP design standards, how do I account for this with the BMP protocols? *Sarah from Scranton*

**A:** Should not be a problem in most states. Simply enter the BMP data into your states compliance spreadsheet, and enter the engineering parameter data into the curves. Enhanced BMP designs treat or reduce more runoff than basic designs, and are likely to earn greater pollutant reduction credits.

**Q25:** What happens if my redevelopment site is currently served by an existing BMP? *Elena from Edgewater*

**A:** Unless it was previously reported to the state for credit in the model, you don't have to account for it (the removal rates for older practices are very low). If it was reported, you may still get incremental credit for your new BMP as a retrofit.

### ***Specific Questions for Stormwater Retrofits***

**Q26:** Is a methodology being developed to determine credits for retrofits relative to the existing practice in-place? *Albert from Tidewater*

**A:** Retrofits of existing BMP facilities (conversion, enhancement or restoration) take into account the removal rate of the existing facility and the pollutant removal is reported as an incremental removal rate. If the original BMP was previously reported by the state for credit in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model, then the locality must indicate that the removal rate for the existing BMP must be removed from the state input deck and be replaced an interim rate for one year, which is the new removal rate determined by the curves.

The higher rate would then be reported in the succeeding year, and the interim rate removed. However, practices that were never reported for credit in the Watershed Model are considered “new retrofit facilities” the removal rates of which are determined by the curves.

**Q27:** What about when a locality is “enhancing or converting” a dry pond or a dry extended detention pond? *Louisa from Hagerstown*

**A:** Dry ponds and dry extended detention ponds are not considered either RR or ST practices. To determine their original removal rates, users should refer to Table A-5 (Approved CBP BMP Efficiency Rates) in the Retrofit Memo.

**Q28:** What determines the difference between an enhancement and conversion? *Ed from Elkton*

**A:** A BMP conversion involves a change in stormwater treatment mechanism of at least 50% of the final water quality volume for the retrofit project. BMP enhancement project utilize the same basic stormwater treatment mechanism as was originally installed, although they may add more treatment volume, increase hydraulic residence time, or add other treatment mechanisms (e.g., micro-pools, forebays and wetland elements that collectively comprise less than 50% of the total water quality treatment volume.

### ***Miscellaneous Questions***

**Q29:** Are the pollutant removal curves applicable to other regions of the US? *Barry from LA*

**A:** Not without some adaptation to reflect local rainfall frequency spectrum. The Bay curves are based on a rainfall frequency analysis done with precipitation data from Reagan National Airport in Virginia. The curves could be applicable to other regions of the USA as long as the precipitation analysis described in the report appendices is updated with local data.

**Q30:** Do these removal efficiencies apply to other pollutants as well? *Frances from Farmingham*

**A:** The urban BMPs were evaluated for their ability to remove Total Phosphorus, Total Nitrogen and Total Suspended Solids only in order to meet the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Limited data is available for other pollutants such as bacteria or trace metals, and the Bay curves should not be used for this purpose.