



## Soils Technician Course Tennessee Department of Transportation 2020 Manual



## **Soils Technician Course**

#### Tennessee Department of Transportation

#### 2020 Manual

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#### **Course Highlights**

- Originally part of the aggregate technician course and formally known as the Soils and Aggregate Technician Course
- The Soils part of this class has been consolidated into this online learning module
- Slide Presentations
- No certification or exam will be provided







#### **Soils Classification**

#### **AASHTO M1245**

#### **ASTM D2487**









#### Classification

- Laboratory confirmation of the field determination.
- Two major soil classification systems used in the US.
  - Unified Soil Classification

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AASHTO Classification





#### **Unified Soil Classification**

| 50% retained o                            | n No. 200 (0.075<br>ED (Silts and Cl | Sands and Gravels) - more than<br>mm) sieve<br>ays) - 50% or more passes the | Group<br>Symbol                   | Group<br>Name <sup>®</sup>         |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| GRAVELS                                   | CLEAN<br>GRAVELS                     | $C_u \!\geq\! 4$ and $1 \!\leq\! C_c \!\leq\! 3^{\text{*}}$                  | GW                                | Well-graded                        |
| More than 50% of                          | < 5% fines                           | $C_u < 4$ and/or $1 > C_c > 3^{\ast}$  | GP                                | Poorly-grade<br>gravel             |
| coarse                                    | GRAVELS                              | Fines classify as ML or MH   | GM                                | Silty gravel <sup>44</sup>         |
| Fraction<br>retained on<br>No. 4<br>Sieve | WITH FINES                           | Fines classify as CL or CH   | GC                                | Clayey<br>gravel <sup>fga</sup>    |
| SANDS                                     | CLEAN                                | $C_u \geq 6 \text{ and } 1 \leq C_c \leq 3^e$                                | SW                                | Well-graded<br>Sand <sup>i</sup>   |
| 50% or more<br>of coarse                  | < 5% fines <sup>d</sup>              | $C_u < 6$ and/or $1 > C_c > 3^e$   | SP                                | Poorly-grade<br>sand               |
| fraction                                  | SANDS WITH                           | Fines classify as ML or MH   | SM                                | Silty sand                         |
| passes No. 4<br>Sieve                     | FINES<br>> 12% fines <sup>d</sup>    | Fines classify as CL or CH   | SC                                | Clayey<br>sand <sup>g ki</sup>     |
| SILTS AND                                 | Inorganic                            | PI > 7 and plots on or above<br>"A" line <sup>1</sup>                        | CL                                | Lean clay <sup>k1,m</sup>          |
| CLAYS                                     |                                      | PI < 4 or plots below "A" line   | ML                                | Siltkim                            |
| Liquid limit<br>lare than 50 Organic      | Liquid limit - overdried < 0.75      | OL   | Organic<br>clay <sup>k1,m,n</sup> |                                    |
| less than 50                              | Organic                              | Liquid limit - not dried   | OL                                | Organic<br>silt <sup>almo</sup>    |
| SILTS AND                                 | Inorganic                            | PI plots on or above "A" line  | CH                                | Fat clayklm                        |
| CLAYS                                     | morpulic                             | PI plots below "A" line  | MH                                | Elastic silt <sup>k,th</sup>       |
| Liquid limit<br>50 or more                | Organic                              | Liquid limit - oven dried<br>Liquid limit - not dried < 0.75                 | ОН                                | Organic<br>clay <sup>k1mp</sup>    |
|   | o.Bume                               | Laquid minit - not dried   | on                                | Organic<br>silt <sup>a lan,q</sup> |
| Highly<br>fibrous<br>organic soils        | Primary organic<br>organic odor      | matter, dark in color, and   | Pt                                | Peat                               |

#### **Coarse-grained Soils**

- G gravel
- S sand

#### Fine-grained Soils

- M inorganic silts
- C inorganic clays
- O organic clays and silts

#### Subcategories

•

- W well graded, fairly clean
- C significant amounts of clay
- P poorly graded, fairly clean
- M significant amounts of silt
- L low Compressibility
- H high Compressibility

#### **AASHTO Soil Classification**

| General Classification                              | Gra          | anular Materials (35% | or less pa | issing th  | e 0.075 m | m sieve)   |        | Silt-Clay I | Materials (>3 | 5% passing | the 0.075 mm sieve  |  |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------------|--|
| Crown Classification                                | A-1          |                       | A-3        | A-2        |           |            |        | A-4         | A-5           | A-6        | A-7                 |  |
| Group Classification                                | A-1-a        | A-1-b                 | A-D        | A-2-4      | A-2-5     | A-2-6      | A-2-7  | H-4         | A-D           | A-0        | A-7-5 A-7-6         |  |
| Sieve Analysis, % passing                           |              |                       |            |            |           |            |        |             |               |            |                     |  |
| 2.00 mm (No. 10)                                    | 50 max       |                       |            |            |           |            |        |             |               |            |                     |  |
| 0.425 (No. 40)                                      | 30 max       | 50 max                | 51 min     |            |           |            |        |             |               |            |                     |  |
| 0.075 (No. 200)                                     | 15 max       | 25 max                | 10 max     | 35 max     | 35 max    | 35 max     | 35 max | 36 min      | 36 min        | 36 min     | 36 min              |  |
| Characteristics of fraction passing 0.425 mm (No. 4 | 0)           |                       |            |            |           |            |        |             |               |            |                     |  |
| Liquid Limit  |              |                       |            | 40 max     | 41 min    | 40 max     | 41 min | 40 max      | 41 min        | 40 max     | 41 min              |  |
| Plasticity Index                                    | 6 max        |                       | N.P.       | 10 max     | 10 max    | 11 min     | 11 min | 10 max      | 10 max        | 11 min     | 11 min <sup>1</sup> |  |
| Usual types of significant constituent materials    | stone fragme | ents, gravel and sand | fine sand  | silty or o | layey gra | vel and sa | and    | silty soils |               | clayey soi | IS .                |  |
| General rating as a subgrade                        | excellent to | good                  |            |            |           |            |        | fair to poo | r             |            |                     |  |

Note (1): Plasticity index of A-7-5 subgroup is equal to or less than the LL - 30. Plasticity index of A-7-6 subgroup is greater than LL - 30

| Soil | Group        | Co                | mparable Soil G              |                            |
|------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| AAS  | n —<br>HTO — | Most<br>Probable  | in Unified Syste<br>Possible | Possible but<br>Improbable |
|      | l-a          | GW, GP            | SW, SP                       | GM, SM                     |
|      | 1-b          | SW, SP,<br>GM, SM | GP<br>GP                     | -                          |
| A    | -3           | SP                | -                            | SW, GP                     |
| A-   | 2-4          | GM, SM            | GC, SC                       | GW, GP<br>SW, SP           |
| ۸-   | 2-5          | GM, SM            | -                            | GW, GP,<br>SW, SP          |
| A-   | 2-6          | GC, SC            | GM, SM                       | GW, GP<br>SW, SP           |
| A-:  |              | GM, GC,<br>SM, SC | -                            | GW, GP,<br>SW, SP          |
| ۸.   | 4            | ML, OL            | CL, SM,<br>SC                | GM, GC                     |
| A.   |              | OH, MH,<br>ML, OL | -                            | SM, GM                     |
| Α.   | -6           | CL                | ML, OL,<br>SC                | GC, GM,<br>SM              |
| A-7  | 7-5          | он, мн            | ML, OL.,<br>CH               | GM, SM,<br>GC, SC          |
| A-1  | 7-6          | CH, CL            | ML, OL,<br>SC                | ОН, МН,<br>GC, GM,<br>SM   |

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## **Engineering Characteristics**





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#### **Embankment Construction**

# TDOT Standard Specifications (Section 205)





#### Major Embankment Materials

- Rock fragments
- Gravel
- Sand
- Silt
- Clay

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#### **Organic Materials**

 Topsoil or other organic material should never be used as embankment material.



#### Graded Solid Rock (Item 203-02.01)

- Sometimes embankments are constructed out of rock to bridge soft soils or to provide a steeper slope than permitted by conventional fill.
- Graded Solid Rock is typical and is defined in the spec book as follows:
  - Max Particle Size of 3 Feet in any direction.
  - Particle size distribution in which at least 50% of the rock is uniformly distributed between 1
  - between 1 foot and 3 feet in diameter, and no more than
  - nore than 10% is less than 2 inches in diameter.
  - Roughly equi-dimensional in shape.
  - No thin, slabby material.











- Construct embankments so as to provide adequate surface drainage at all times.
- Keep placing and compacting area separate.
- Compact each layer of embankment to the required density.
- Obtain engineers approval before proceeding with each succeeding layer.
- Do not incorporate or bury any perishable materials or obstructions.
- Embankments must be built up in uniform, wellmixed layers for the full width of the roadway.

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#### Embankment Placement Equipment and Procedures

- The equipment and procedures involved in the dumping and spreading of the embankment material will depend on the type of equipment available and material used.
- The contractor must have enough equipment and use procedures that will enable proper moisture and compaction requirements to be met.



## Compaction





#### Why Do We Compact?

- To improve the engineering properties of the soil mass, which in turn will:
  - Increase the strength and stiffness of t he embankment
  - Increase the bearing capacity of foundations
  - Decrease the settlement of the roadway embankment
  - Reduce movement of water
  - Increase the stability of slopes and embankments
  - Provide uniformity





## **Compaction Equipment**





#### **Tamping-Foot Roller**

- A tamping-foot roller is a modification of the sheepsfoot roller
- The tamping feet are trapezoidal pads attached to a drum
- Tamping-foot rollers are normally self-propelled, and the drum may be capable of vibrating
- The tamping-foot roller is suitable for use with a wide range of soil types



#### **Pneumatic Rollers**

- Variants include: pneumatictired roller & self-propelled pneumatic-tired roller
- Suitable for granular materials; however, it is not recommended for finegrained clay soils except as necessary for sealing the surface after a sheepsfoot roller has "walked out"
- It compacts from the top down and is used for finishing all types of materials, following immediately behind the blade and water truck



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#### Self-Propelled, Smooth-Drum Vibratory Roller

- Compacts with a vibratory action that rearranges the soil particles into a denser mass
- The best results are obtained on cohesionless sands and gravels
- Compaction efficiency is impacted by the ground speed of the roller and the frequency and amplitude of the vibrating drum





#### **Proctor Density Testing**

#### **AASHTO T99**

#### **AASHTO T180**






| Test<br>Method                          | Mold<br>Diam<br>(in) | Mold<br>Height<br>(in) | Mold<br>Vol.<br>(ft <sup>3</sup> ) | Rammer<br>Wt.<br>(lbs.) | Rammer<br>Drop<br>Height<br>(in) | No of<br>Layers | Blows/<br>Layer | Energy (ft-<br>lbs/ft <sup>3</sup> ) |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| AASHTO<br>T99 -<br>Standard<br>Proctor  | 4                    | 4.5                    | 1/30                               | 5.5                     | 12                               | 3               | 25              | 12375                                |
| AASHTO<br>T180 -<br>Modified<br>Proctor | 4                    | 4.5                    | 1/30                               | 10                      | 18                               | 5               | 25              | 56250                                |











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## **Nuclear Density Testing**

### SOP 7-1

### **AASHTO T310**





#### **TDOT Certification**

- In order to perform Nuclear Density testing on a TDOT project. The individual performing the test must take the Nuclear Gauge Field Technician Course.
- This half-day course is designed to cover TDOT policy on the proper testing procedure for Nuclear Density Gauges as well as covering random testing for density on a project site.

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#### Nuclear Density/Moisture Testing

Soils and Aggregate Technician Certification

- Regardless of gauge manufacturer (Troxler, Humbolt, Instrotek, etc.), all gauges utilize the same basic components.
- All tests performed on soil and aggregate will be using the Direct Transmission method.











## **Quality Acceptance Testing**

SOP 1-1





#### Quality Acceptance Testing: Procedure

- Identify Density/Moisture Requirements
  - Based on type of material being placed
  - Target values are determined by Materials and Tests and submitted to Project Supervisor.
  - These values may change during the course of the project, so be sure to make sure you have the most current numbers.
- Determine Required Lot Size/Number of Tests
- Determine Test Locations
- Perform Test(s)
- Report Results

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#### Determine Required: Lot Size/Number of Tests/Test Locations

- S.O.P. 1-1: Sampling and Testing Guide
  - Describes the testing frequency for all materials
  - Lists the person responsible for either obtaining the sample or performing the test.
  - Available in PDF format at:
  - <u>https://www.tn.gov/tdot/materials-and-</u> tests/standard-operating-procedures.html

#### **Quality Acceptance Testing:** Soil Best Practices

- Use a "test strip" to determine the approximate number of passes needed to attain proper densities
- Test every lift as soon as compaction is completed
- Test obvious weak spots
- Remove all oversized materials
- Remove any pockets of organic or unsuitable soil material





## **TDOT Requirements**

## TDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (2015)





#### **TDOT Requirements**

 TDOT requires that a certain percentage of the maximum dry density ("relative compaction") be obtained while the moisture content of the soils is held within certain limits.



#### Relating Laboratory Tests to Field Test Results

- Relative Compaction (RC) is used to express laboratory-measured compaction parameters in terms of field compaction.
- RC is simply the ratio of the desired field dry unit weight to the maximum dry density measured in the laboratory.

$$RC = \frac{\gamma_{d \text{ field}}}{\gamma_{d \text{ max}}} \times 100\%$$

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#### Minimum 95% Max Density Standard Specifications Section 205.04

- Compact each layer to a minimum of 95% maximum density.
- When a minimum of 95 percent maximum density is required, the moisture content of the material must be within the range of values at which this density can be obtained







- The contractor is required to aerate the material or distribute and incorporate water uniformly to control moisture content within appropriate limits
- If the moisture is within the appropriate limits but the density is not, additional compaction is necessary





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**Corrective Actions** 







#### **Over Compaction**

- Occurs when material is densified • Too many passes in excess of specified range.
- Wasted construction effort and time.

- Causes:
- with construction equipment.
- Change in soil type.



#### **Under Compaction**

- Occurs when material is not densified sufficiently.
- Could be localized or throughout entire layer, depending on the cause.
- Causes:
- A missed roller pass.
- Insufficient roller weight.
- A change in operating frequency or amplitude.
- A defective roller drum.
- Improper type of compaction equipment.
- Change in soil type.



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**Pipe Installation** 

## **TDOT Standard Specifications**

**TDOT Standard Drawings** 





#### General Pipe Installation Procedure

- Locate Utilities
- Excavate trench
- Explore foundation
- Place loose bedding under pipe
- Install pipe
- Compact bedding
- Backfill



#### **Trenching Best Practices**

- When installing your trench, make sure to keep in mind the following:
  - Safety First: follow all applicable OSHA requirements
  - For trenches with in-situ soils walls, the soil shall be firm and able to stand up on its own
  - Don't over or under excavate trench
  - Ensure the proper width of trench is dug as it relates to the pipe diameter
  - Brace as needed and don't get too far ahead of installation

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#### Compaction

- It is important to get the same amount of compaction across the entire area of soil
- If one part of the foundation is hard and another is soft, the pipe will settle unevenly



- If the foundation is found unacceptable or the water table is found to be high during excavation:
  - Improved foundation or excavatable flowable fill may be used at the engineers discretion









#### **Unclassified Backfill Requirements**

• Unclassified backfill shall be placed and compacted in layers not exceeding a 6 inch loose lift thickness and brought up evenly and simultaneously on both sides of the pipe to an elevation not less than one foot above the top of the pipe







#### Trenchless Technology Installation Applications

- New Installations:
  - Jack and Bore
  - Pipe Ramming
  - Moles and Small Rammers
  - Pipe Jacking
  - Microtunneling
  - Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD)

