FOR THE RECORD · ANSWERED FROM BERKELEY COUNTY'S OWN DOCUMENTS

The 2026 Stormwater Design Standards Manual: What Its Status Actually Is

A plain-language fact sheet on the Cane Bay / Lake Village stormwater question · Prepared September 2026

The question that keeps causing confusion: Is the County's 2026 Stormwater Design Standards Manual adopted and in effect — and is the project being held to, or measured against, that 2026 standard?

The straight answer, from the County's own records: The 2026 Stormwater Design Standards Manual is **not yet final or in effect.** Berkeley County's own Stormwater Management Program — dated January 2026 — states in plain words that the manual "is currently being updated" and "is in the process of additional updates being developed and adopted." It has been approved at the staff/engineering level, but the County's records do not show it as adopted or made effective. Until the update is finalized, the County's existing adopted manual (the 2009 edition) is the operative standard. Any statement that a project "exceeds the 2026 standard" is therefore a comparison to a draft that is not yet the governing standard.

A STATEMENT THAT CAN BE GIVEN ON THE RECORD WITH CONFIDENCE

"Berkeley County's adopted Stormwater Design Standards Manual remains in force while the 2026 update is completed. Per the County's own Stormwater Management Program, the 2026 manual is still 'being developed and adopted' and is not yet in effect. Projects are reviewed under the adopted manual now; the updated 2026 standard will apply once it is finalized and made effective."

THE RECEIPTS — EVERY POINT TIED TO A COUNTY DOCUMENT

1. **The adopted manual is the 2009 edition.** Its cover reads "Adopted December 1, 2009 — effective immediately." *(Stormwater Design Standards Manual, cover page.)*
2. **The County itself calls 2009 the last update.** A County Engineering technical memo dated January 2022 states the manual "was last updated in December 2009." *(Administration Memo / Key Points, 2021 Update.)*
3. **The 2026 versions carry no adoption or effective date.** Their covers read only "September 2026 — Berkeley County Engineering"; their internal file title is "AECOM Report"; and the manual states its updates are "approved by the County Engineer." *(2026 Design Standards Manual PDFs.)*
4. **It was still an active, paid consultant project into late 2025.** The County issued Purchase Order P055873 to AECOM for $49,400 for the "2021 Stormwater Design Standards Manual Update," dated September 17, 2025; a County Engineer–AECOM email references preparing "the task order for the Design Manual edits" and AECOM's "final draft." *(AECOM PO P055873; 2025 update email.)*
5. **The County's own signed Program says the manual is not finished.** The Stormwater Management Program (SWMP, January 2026; Johnny Cribb, County Supervisor, as permittee) states the Design Standards Manual "is currently being updated and expected to be completed by Spring 2026" (pp. 47–48)

and “is in the process of additional updates being developed and adopted after SCDES’s finalized CGP update” (pp. 53–54). The manual is Appendix J of that Program. *(SWMP-2026, pp. 47–48, 53–54, 303.)*

6. **The website labeled it “Effective 09/2026,” then removed the word “Effective.”** County web-content tickets show the 2026 manual posted online titled “Effective 09/2026” on June 30, 2026, replaced five times over the summer, and on September 1, 2026 retitled from “…Effective 09/2026” to simply “Stormwater Design Standards Manual 2026.” *(myBerkeley Web Content-Management tickets #51, #20, #8, #67, #34, #43.)*

7. **Nothing ties any manual version to this project.** Across all 97 records the County released, no document references Cane Bay, Lake Village, or Bill 26-59, and no “grandfathering” or “vesting” language appears anywhere. *(FOIA W021763-091526, full 97-file release.)*

What this is, and is not. This is not an accusation. It is the plain status of a document that is still being completed. The value of stating it correctly, once, on the record is that it ends the confusion — residents stop chasing a “2026 standard” that is not yet in effect, and the County is credited for an update that is genuinely in progress.

One honest caveat: a separate FOIA request to Berkeley County Council remains In Progress. If a formal Council adoption of the 2026 manual exists, it would appear in that response; accordingly this fact sheet states that the records *produced* show no adoption, not that adoption can never occur.

Prepared from Berkeley County’s own records produced under FOIA Request **W021763-091526** (Full Release, 97 files, September 2026) and the County’s Stormwater Management Program (SWMP-2026). Compiled by Rev. Leroy Godfrey Jr., Windwood resident, Berkeley County District 6. Source documents available on request.