

CIVIL ENGINEERING COMMON TERMS

Last updated: 09/01/15

100-yr	This refers to a rainfall event that has a 1 in 100 chance (1.00%) of occurring in a given year. This DOES NOT mean that a 100-yr event will occur only once in 100 years!
AC	Acre 43,560 square feet – measurement of area
Benchmark	The term is generally applied to any item used as an elevation reference. Surveyors use a Benchmark to establish initial elevations for a particular site.
BFE	Base flood Elevation. The term BFE refers to the 100-year flood plan elevation above sea level for a particular location.
CF	Cubic foot or cubic feet – measurement of volume
CMP	Corrugated Metal Pipe
COH	City of Houston
CRCP	Continuously Reinforced Concrete Pavement or concrete pavement
CY	Cubic yard – measurement of volume
FFE	Also referred to as FF is Finished Floor Elevation. The term FFE refers to the top of the structural slab and its elevation above sea level.
FG	Finished grade. The term FG refers to the elevation above sea level for the finished grade or finished ground.
HC	Harris County
HCFC	Harris County Flood Control District
HDPE	High Density Polyethylene Pipe
HMA	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement or asphalt pavement
MC	Montgomery County
MUD	Municipal Utility District, provides utility services (typical water and/or sanitary sewer) in areas outside the City Limits or where City utilities aren't available.
Plat	Not an acronym. A plat is a map or drawing that shows the boundary or division of land. Typically a property is re-platted when consolidating multiple lots or dividing a tract of land into multiple lots.
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride Pipe
RCP	Reinforced Concrete Pipe
SF	Square feet or square foot – measurement of area
SW	Sidewalk
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan – this is the design for the erosion control methods used during construction.
SWQMP	Storm water quality management plan – this is required for sites greater than 5 acres and is the long term control of storm water quality.
TOC	Also referred to as TC is top of curb. The term TOC refers to the elevation above sea level for the top of curb.
TOP	Also referred to as TP is Top of Pavement. The term TOP refers to the elevation above sea level for the top of pavement.
TSARP	Tropical Storm Allison Recovery Project, a comprehensive study to adjust flood data and flood maps in Harris County after Tropical Storm Allison caused

flooding across Texas specifically the greater Houston area in 2001.

TxDOT Texas Department of Transportation

WSE Water surface elevation, commonly used when talking about the capacity of a detention pond. The WSE is the elevation above sea level in which a pond will be filled under certain criteria (100-year rainfall event, etc.).