



PDHonline Course H119 (2 PDH)

Estimating Storm Water Runoff

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Table 3-1
Runoff Calculation Methods: Selection Criteria

Calculation Methods *

1. Rational Method
2. Peak Discharge Method
3. Tabular Method (TR-55)
4. Unit Hydrograph Method

Output Requirements	Drainage Area	Appropriate Calculation Methods
Peak discharge only	Up to 81 hectares (200 acres) Up to 809 hectares (2,000 acres) Up to 52 sq km (20 square miles)	1,2,3,4 2,3,4 3,4
Peak discharge and total runoff volume	Up to 809 hectares (2,000 acres) Up to 52 sq km (20 square miles)	2,3,4 3,4
Runoff hydrograph	Up to 52 sq km (20 square miles)	3,4

* There are numerous publications that describe the four methods listed in Table 3-1. A comprehensive discussion of each of these methods is beyond the scope of this pamphlet; readers are encouraged to consult other sources. One such source is McCuen, Richard H., *Hydrologic Analysis and Design*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1989.