

Directions for Application:

- (1) From precipitation maps determine 6 hr and 24 hr amounts for the selected frequency. These maps are included in the County Hydrology Manual (10, 50, and 100 yr maps included in the Design and Procedure Manual).
- (2) Adjust 6 hr precipitation (if necessary) so that it is within the range of 45% to 65% of the 24 hr precipitation (not applicable to Desert).
- (3) Plot 6 hr precipitation on the right side of the chart.
- (4) Draw a line through the point parallel to the plotted lines.
- (5) This line is the intensity-duration curve for the location being analyzed.

Application Form:

- (a) Selected frequency _____ year
- (b) $P_6 =$ _____ in., $P_{24} =$ _____, $\frac{P_6}{P_{24}} =$ _____ %⁽²⁾
- (c) Adjusted P_6 ⁽²⁾ = _____ in.
- (d) $t_x =$ _____ min.
- (e) $I =$ _____ in./hr.

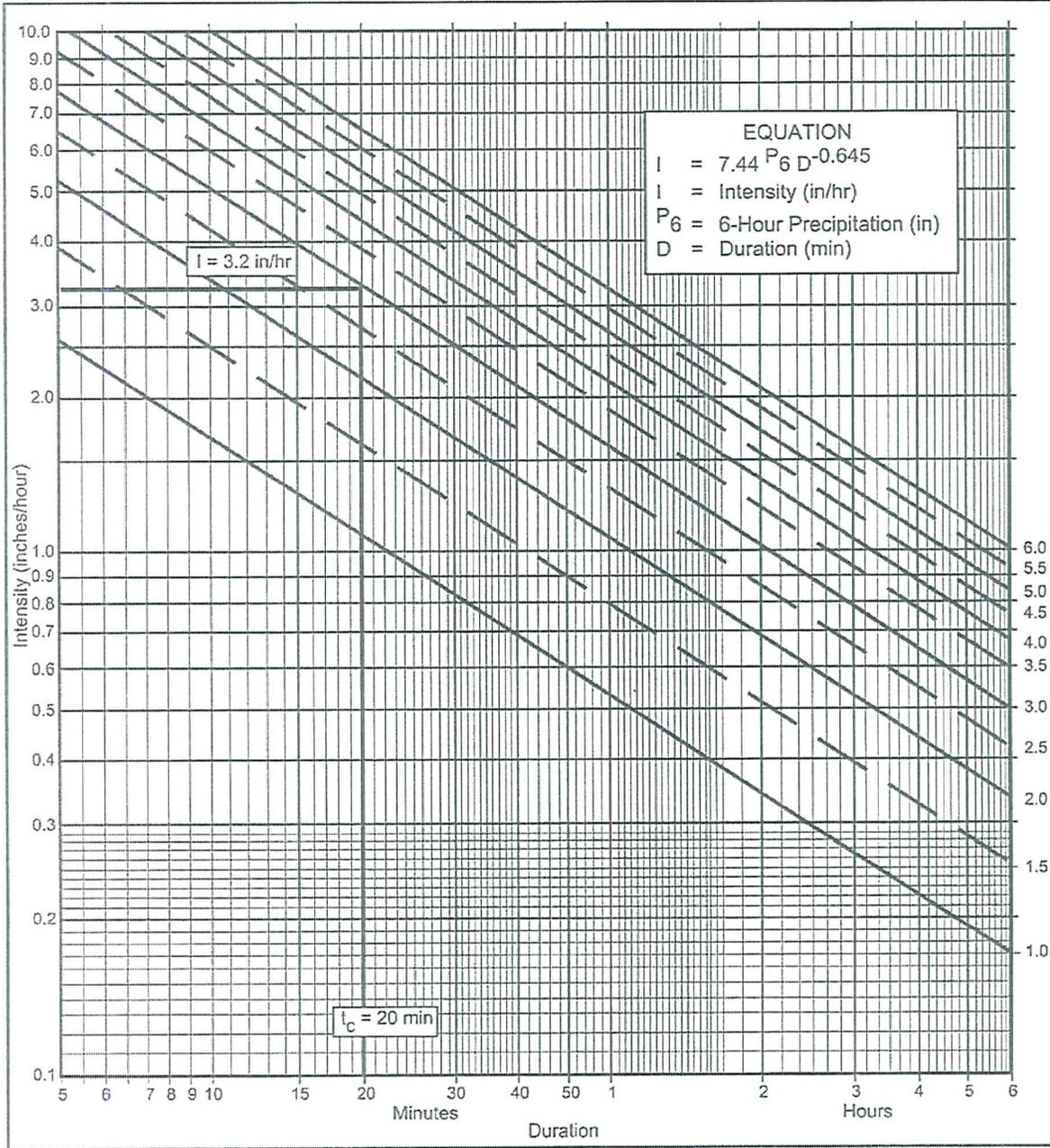
Note: This chart replaces the Intensity-Duration-Frequency curves used since 1965.

P6	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6
Duration											
5	2.63	3.95	5.27	6.59	7.90	9.22	10.54	11.86	13.17	14.49	15.81
7	2.12	3.18	4.24	5.30	6.36	7.42	8.48	9.54	10.60	11.66	12.72
10	1.68	2.53	3.37	4.21	5.05	5.90	6.74	7.58	8.42	9.27	10.11
15	1.30	1.95	2.59	3.24	3.89	4.54	5.19	5.84	6.49	7.13	7.78
20	1.08	1.62	2.15	2.69	3.23	3.77	4.31	4.85	5.39	5.93	6.46
25	0.93	1.40	1.87	2.33	2.80	3.27	3.73	4.20	4.67	5.13	5.60
30	0.83	1.24	1.66	2.07	2.49	2.90	3.32	3.73	4.15	4.56	4.98
40	0.69	1.03	1.38	1.72	2.07	2.41	2.76	3.10	3.45	3.79	4.13
50	0.60	0.90	1.19	1.49	1.79	2.09	2.39	2.69	2.98	3.28	3.58
60	0.53	0.80	1.06	1.33	1.59	1.86	2.12	2.39	2.65	2.92	3.18
90	0.41	0.61	0.82	1.02	1.23	1.43	1.63	1.84	2.04	2.25	2.45
120	0.34	0.51	0.68	0.85	1.02	1.19	1.36	1.53	1.70	1.87	2.04
150	0.29	0.44	0.59	0.73	0.88	1.03	1.18	1.32	1.47	1.62	1.76
180	0.26	0.39	0.52	0.65	0.78	0.91	1.04	1.18	1.31	1.44	1.57
240	0.22	0.33	0.43	0.54	0.65	0.76	0.87	0.98	1.08	1.19	1.30
300	0.19	0.28	0.38	0.47	0.56	0.66	0.75	0.85	0.94	1.03	1.13
360	0.17	0.25	0.33	0.42	0.50	0.58	0.67	0.75	0.84	0.92	1.00

Intensity-Duration Design Chart - Template

FIGURE

3-1



Directions for Application:

- (1) From precipitation maps determine 6 hr and 24 hr amounts for the selected frequency. These maps are included in the County Hydrology Manual (10, 50, and 100 yr maps included in the Design and Procedure Manual).
- (2) Adjust 6 hr precipitation (if necessary) so that it is within the range of 45% to 65% of the 24 hr precipitation (not applicable to Desert).
- (3) Plot 6 hr precipitation on the right side of the chart.
- (4) Draw a line through the point parallel to the plotted lines.
- (5) This line is the intensity-duration curve for the location being analyzed.

Application Form:

- (a) Selected frequency 50 year
- (b) $P_6 =$ 3 in., $P_{24} =$ 5.5, $\frac{P_6}{P_{24}} =$ 54.5 %⁽²⁾
- (c) Adjusted $P_6^{(2)} =$ 3 in.
- (d) $t_x =$ 20 min.
- (e) $I =$ 3.2 in./hr.

Note: This chart replaces the Intensity-Duration-Frequency curves used since 1965.

P6 Duration	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6
	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
5	2.63	3.95	5.27	6.59	7.90	9.22	10.54	11.86	13.17	14.49	15.81
7	2.12	3.18	4.24	5.30	6.36	7.42	8.48	9.54	10.60	11.66	12.72
10	1.68	2.53	3.37	4.21	5.05	5.90	6.74	7.58	8.42	9.27	10.11
15	1.30	1.95	2.59	3.24	3.89	4.54	5.19	5.84	6.49	7.13	7.78
20	1.08	1.62	2.15	2.69	3.23	3.77	4.31	4.85	5.39	5.93	6.46
25	0.93	1.40	1.87	2.33	2.80	3.27	3.73	4.20	4.67	5.13	5.60
30	0.83	1.24	1.66	2.07	2.49	2.90	3.32	3.73	4.15	4.56	4.98
40	0.69	1.03	1.38	1.72	2.07	2.41	2.76	3.10	3.45	3.79	4.13
50	0.60	0.90	1.19	1.49	1.79	2.09	2.39	2.69	2.98	3.28	3.58
60	0.53	0.80	1.06	1.33	1.59	1.86	2.12	2.39	2.65	2.92	3.18
90	0.41	0.61	0.82	1.02	1.23	1.43	1.63	1.84	2.04	2.25	2.45
120	0.34	0.51	0.68	0.85	1.02	1.19	1.36	1.53	1.70	1.87	2.04
150	0.29	0.44	0.59	0.73	0.88	1.03	1.18	1.32	1.47	1.62	1.76
180	0.26	0.39	0.52	0.65	0.78	0.91	1.04	1.18	1.31	1.44	1.57
240	0.22	0.33	0.43	0.54	0.65	0.76	0.87	0.98	1.08	1.19	1.30
300	0.19	0.28	0.38	0.47	0.56	0.66	0.75	0.85	0.94	1.03	1.13
360	0.17	0.25	0.33	0.42	0.50	0.58	0.67	0.75	0.84	0.92	1.00

Intensity-Duration Design Chart - Example

FIGURE

3-2

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY – RATIONAL METHOD PEAK FLOWRATE DETERMINATION (ULTIMATE CONDITIONS)

2.4 – Model Development Summary (from San Diego County Hydrology Manual)

2.3 SELECTION OF HYDROLOGIC METHOD AND DESIGN CRITERIA

Design Frequency – The flood frequency for determining the design storm discharge is 50 years for drainage that is upstream of any major roadway and 100 years frequency for all design storms at a major roadway, crossing the major roadway and thereafter. The 50-year storm flows shall be contained within the pipe and not encroach into the travel lane. For the 100-year storm this includes allowing one lane of a four-lane road (four or more lanes) to be used for conveyance without encroaching onto private property outside the dedicated street right-of-way. Natural channels that remain natural within private property are excluded from the right-of-way guideline.

Design Method – The choice of method to determine flows (discharge) shall be based on the size of the watershed area. For an area 0 to approximately 1 square mile the Rational Method or the Modified Rational Method shall be used. For watershed areas larger than 1 square mile the NRCS hydrologic method shall be used. Please check with the governing agency for any variations to these guidelines.

SECTION 3 RATIONAL METHOD AND MODIFIED RATIONAL METHOD

3.1 THE RATIONAL METHOD

The Rational Method (RM) is a mathematical formula used to determine the maximum runoff rate from a given rainfall. It has particular application in urban storm drainage, where it is used to estimate peak runoff rates from small urban and rural watersheds for the design of storm drains and small drainage structures. The RM is recommended for analyzing the runoff response from drainage areas up to approximately 1 square mile in size. It should not be used in instances where there is a junction of independent drainage systems or for drainage areas greater than approximately 1 square mile in size. In these instances, the Modified Rational Method (MRM) should be used for junctions of independent drainage systems in watersheds up to approximately 1 square mile in size (see Section 3.4); or the NRCS Hydrologic Method should be used for watersheds greater than approximately 1 square mile in size (see Section 4).

The RM can be applied using any design storm frequency (e.g., 100-year, 50-year, 10-year, etc.). The local agency determines the design storm frequency that must be used based on the type of project and specific local requirements. A discussion of design storm frequency is provided in Section 2.3 of this manual. A procedure has been developed that converts the 6-hour and 24-hour precipitation isopluvial map data to an Intensity-Duration curve that can be used for the rainfall intensity in the RM formula as shown in Figure 3-1. The RM is applicable to a 6-hour storm duration because the procedure uses Intensity-Duration Design Charts that are based on a 6-hour storm duration.

3.1.1 Rational Method Formula

The RM formula estimates the peak rate of runoff at any location in a watershed as a function of the drainage area (A), runoff coefficient (C), and rainfall intensity (I) for a duration equal to the time of concentration (T_c), which is the time required for water to

flow from the most remote point of the basin to the location being analyzed. The RM formula is expressed as follows:

$$Q = C I A$$

- Where:
- Q = peak discharge, in cubic feet per second (cfs)
 - C = runoff coefficient, proportion of the rainfall that runs off the surface (no units)
 - I = average rainfall intensity for a duration equal to the T_c for the area, in inches per hour (Note: If the computed T_c is less than 5 minutes, use 5 minutes for computing the peak discharge, Q)
 - A = drainage area contributing to the design location, in acres

Combining the units for the expression CIA yields:

$$\left(\frac{1 \text{ acre} \times \text{inch}}{\text{hour}} \right) \left(\frac{43,560 \text{ ft}^2}{\text{acre}} \right) \left(\frac{1 \text{ foot}}{12 \text{ inches}} \right) \left(\frac{1 \text{ hour}}{3,600 \text{ seconds}} \right) \Rightarrow 1.008 \text{ cfs}$$

For practical purposes the unit conversion coefficient difference of 0.8% can be ignored.

The RM formula is based on the assumption that for constant rainfall intensity, the peak discharge rate at a point will occur when the raindrop that falls at the most upstream point in the tributary drainage basin arrives at the point of interest.

Unlike the MRM (discussed in Section 3.4) or the NRCS hydrologic method (discussed in Section 4), the RM does not create hydrographs and therefore does not add separate subarea hydrographs at collection points. Instead, the RM develops peak discharges in the main line by increasing the T_c as flow travels downstream.

Characteristics of, or assumptions inherent to, the RM are listed below:

- The discharge flow rate resulting from any I is maximum when the I lasts as long as or longer than the T_c .

- The storm frequency of peak discharges is the same as that of I for the given T_c .
- The fraction of rainfall that becomes runoff (or the runoff coefficient, C) is independent of I or precipitation zone number (PZN) condition (PZN Condition is discussed in Section 4.1.2.4).
- The peak rate of runoff is the only information produced by using the RM.

3.1.2 Runoff Coefficient

Table 3-1 lists the estimated runoff coefficients for urban areas. The concepts related to the runoff coefficient were evaluated in a report entitled *Evaluation, Rational Method "C" Values* (Hill, 2002) that was reviewed by the Hydrology Manual Committee. The Report is available at San Diego County Department of Public Works, Flood Control Section and on the San Diego County Department of Public Works web page.

The runoff coefficients are based on land use and soil type. Soil type can be determined from the soil type map provided in Appendix A. An appropriate runoff coefficient (C) for each type of land use in the subarea should be selected from this table and multiplied by the percentage of the total area (A) included in that class. The sum of the products for all land uses is the weighted runoff coefficient ($\Sigma[CA]$). Good engineering judgment should be used when applying the values presented in Table 3-1, as adjustments to these values may be appropriate based on site-specific characteristics. In any event, the impervious percentage (% Impervious) as given in the table, for any area, shall govern the selected value for C. The runoff coefficient can also be calculated for an area based on soil type and impervious percentage using the following formula:

$$C = 0.90 \times (\% \text{ Impervious}) + C_p \times (1 - \% \text{ Impervious})$$

Where: C_p = Pervious Coefficient Runoff Value for the soil type (shown in Table 3-1 as Undisturbed Natural Terrain/Permanent Open Space, 0% Impervious). Soil type can be determined from the soil type map provided in Appendix A.

The values in Table 3-1 are typical for most urban areas. However, if the basin contains rural or agricultural land use, parks, golf courses, or other types of nonurban land use that are expected to be permanent, the appropriate value should be selected based upon the soil and cover and approved by the local agency.

3.1.3 Rainfall Intensity

The rainfall intensity (I) is the rainfall in inches per hour (in/hr) for a duration equal to the T_c for a selected storm frequency. Once a particular storm frequency has been selected for design and a T_c calculated for the drainage area, the rainfall intensity can be determined from the Intensity-Duration Design Chart (Figure 3-1). The 6-hour storm rainfall amount (P_6) and the 24-hour storm rainfall amount (P_{24}) for the selected storm frequency are also needed for calculation of I . P_6 and P_{24} can be read from the isopluvial maps provided in Appendix B. An Intensity-Duration Design Chart applicable to all areas within San Diego County is provided as Figure 3-1. Figure 3-2 provides an example of use of the Intensity-Duration Design Chart. Intensity can also be calculated using the following equation:

$$I = 7.44 P_6 D^{-0.645}$$

Where: P_6 = adjusted 6-hour storm rainfall amount (see discussion below)
 D = duration in minutes (use T_c)

Note: This equation applies only to the 6-hour storm rainfall amount (i.e., P_6 cannot be changed to P_{24} to calculate a 24-hour intensity using this equation).

The Intensity-Duration Design Chart and the equation are for the 6-hour storm rainfall amount. In general, P_6 for the selected frequency should be between 45% and 65% of P_{24} for the selected frequency. If P_6 is not within 45% to 65% of P_{24} , P_6 should be increased or decreased as necessary to meet this criteria. The isopluvial lines are based on precipitation gauge data. At the time that the isopluvial lines were created, the majority of precipitation gauges in San Diego County were read daily, and these readings yielded 24-hour precipitation data. Some 6-hour data were available from the few recording gauges distributed throughout the County at that time; however, some 6-hour data were extrapolated. Therefore, the 24-hour precipitation data for San Diego County are considered to be more reliable.

3.1.4 Time of Concentration

The Time of Concentration (T_c) is the time required for runoff to flow from the most remote part of the drainage area to the point of interest. The T_c is composed of two components: initial time of concentration (T_i) and travel time (T_t). Methods of computation for T_i and T_t are discussed below. The T_i is the time required for runoff to travel across the surface of the most remote subarea in the study, or “initial subarea.” Guidelines for designating the initial subarea are provided within the discussion of computation of T_i . The T_t is the time required for the runoff to flow in a watercourse (e.g., swale, channel, gutter, pipe) or series of watercourses from the initial subarea to the point of interest. For the RM, the T_c at any point within the drainage area is given by:

$$T_c = T_i + T_t$$

Methods of calculation differ for natural watersheds (nonurbanized) and for urban drainage systems. When analyzing storm drain systems, the designer must consider the possibility that an existing natural watershed may become urbanized during the useful life of the storm drain system. Future land uses must be used for T_c and runoff calculations, and can be determined from the local Community General Plan.

3.1.4.1 Initial Time of Concentration

The initial time of concentration is typically based on sheet flow at the upstream end of a drainage basin. The Overland Time of Flow (Figure 3-3) is approximated by an equation developed by the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) for analyzing flow on runways (FAA, 1970). The usual runway configuration consists of a crown, like most freeways, with sloping pavement that directs flow to either side of the runway. This type of flow is uniform in the direction perpendicular to the velocity and is very shallow. Since these depths are $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch (more or less) in magnitude, the relative roughness is high. Some higher relative roughness values for overland flow are presented in Table 3.5 of the *HEC-1 Flood Hydrograph Package User's Manual* (USACE, 1990).

The sheet flow that is predicted by the FAA equation is limited to conditions that are similar to runway topography. Some considerations that limit the extent to which the FAA equation applies are identified below:

- Urban Areas – This “runway type” runoff includes:
 - 1) Flat roofs, sloping at $1\% \pm$
 - 2) Parking lots at the extreme upstream drainage basin boundary (at the “ridge” of a catchment area).

Even a parking lot is limited in the amounts of sheet flow. Parked or moving vehicles would “break-up” the sheet flow, concentrating runoff into streams that are not characteristic of sheet flow.
 - 3) Driveways are constructed at the upstream end of catchment areas in some developments. However, if flow from a roof is directed to a driveway through a downspout or other conveyance mechanism, flow would be concentrated.
 - 4) Flat slopes are prone to meandering flow that tends to be disrupted by minor irregularities and obstructions. Maximum Overland Flow lengths are shorter for the flatter slopes (see Table 3-2).

- Rural or Natural Areas - The FAA equation is applicable to these conditions since (.5% to 10%) slopes that are uniform in width of flow have slow velocities consistent with the equation. Irregularities in terrain limit the length of application.
 - 1) Most hills and ridge lines have a relatively flat area near the drainage divide. However, with flat slopes of $.5\% \pm$, minor irregularities would cause flow to concentrate into streams.
 - 2) Parks, lawns and other vegetated areas would have slow velocities that are consistent with the FAA Equation.

The concepts related to the initial time of concentration were evaluated in a report entitled *Initial Time of Concentration, Analysis of Parameters* (Hill, 2002) that was reviewed by the Hydrology Manual Committee. The Report is available at San Diego County Department of Public Works, Flood Control Section and on the San Diego County Department of Public Works web page.

Note that the Initial Time of Concentration should be reflective of the general land-use at the upstream end of a drainage basin. A single lot with an area of two or less acres does not have a significant effect where the drainage basin area is 20 to 600 acres.

Table 3-2 provides limits of the length (Maximum Length (L_M)) of sheet flow to be used in hydrology studies. Initial T_i values based on average C values for the Land Use Element are also included. These values can be used in planning and design applications as described below. Exceptions may be approved by the "Regulating Agency" when submitted with a detailed study.

Table 3-2

**MAXIMUM OVERLAND FLOW LENGTH (L_M)
 & INITIAL TIME OF CONCENTRATION (T_i)**

Element*	DU/ Acre	.5%		1%		2%		3%		5%		10%	
		L_M	T_i										
Natural		50	13.2	70	12.5	85	10.9	100	10.3	100	8.7	100	6.9
LDR	1	50	12.2	70	11.5	85	10.0	100	9.5	100	8.0	100	6.4
LDR	2	50	11.3	70	10.5	85	9.2	100	8.8	100	7.4	100	5.8
LDR	2.9	50	10.7	70	10.0	85	8.8	95	8.1	100	7.0	100	5.6
MDR	4.3	50	10.2	70	9.6	80	8.1	95	7.8	100	6.7	100	5.3
MDR	7.3	50	9.2	65	8.4	80	7.4	95	7.0	100	6.0	100	4.8
MDR	10.9	50	8.7	65	7.9	80	6.9	90	6.4	100	5.7	100	4.5
MDR	14.5	50	8.2	65	7.4	80	6.5	90	6.0	100	5.4	100	4.3
HDR	24	50	6.7	65	6.1	75	5.1	90	4.9	95	4.3	100	3.5
HDR	43	50	5.3	65	4.7	75	4.0	85	3.8	95	3.4	100	2.7
N. Com		50	5.3	60	4.5	75	4.0	85	3.8	95	3.4	100	2.7
G. Com		50	4.7	60	4.1	75	3.6	85	3.4	90	2.9	100	2.4
O.P./Com		50	4.2	60	3.7	70	3.1	80	2.9	90	2.6	100	2.2
Limited I.		50	4.2	60	3.7	70	3.1	80	2.9	90	2.6	100	2.2
General I.		50	3.7	60	3.2	70	2.7	80	2.6	90	2.3	100	1.9

*See Table 3-1 for more detailed description

3.1.4.1A Planning Considerations

The purpose of most hydrology studies is to develop flood flow values for areas that are not at the upstream end of the basin. Another example is the Master Plan, which is usually completed before the actual detailed design of lots, streets, etc. are accomplished. In these situations it is necessary that the initial time of concentration be determined without detailed information about flow patterns.

To provide guidance for the initial time of concentration design parameters, Table 3-2 includes the Land Use Elements and other variables related to the Time of Concentration. The table development included a review of the typical “layout” of the different Land Use Elements and related flow patterns and consideration of the extent of the sheet flow regimen, the effect of ponding, the significance to the drainage basin, downstream effects, etc.

3.1.4.1B Computation Criteria

- (a) Developed Drainage Areas With Overland Flow - T_i may be obtained directly from the chart, “Rational Formula – Overland Time of Flow Nomograph,” shown in Figure 3-3 or from Table 3-2. This chart is based on the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) equation (FAA, 1970). For the short rain durations (<15 minutes) involved, intensities are high but the depth of flooding is limited and much of the runoff is stored temporarily in the overland flow and in shallow ponded areas. In developed areas, overland flow is limited to lengths given in Table 3-2. Beyond these distances, flow tends to become concentrated into streets, gutters, swales, ditches, etc.

(b) Natural Or Rural Watersheds – These areas usually have an initial subarea at the upstream end with sheet flow. The sheet flow length is limited to 50 to 100 feet as specified in Table 3-2. The Overland Time of Flow Nomograph, Figure 3-3, can be used to obtain T_i . The initial time of concentration can excessively affect the magnitude of flow further downstream in the drainage basin. For instance, variations in the initial time of concentration for an initial subarea of one acre can change the flow further downstream where the area is 400 acres by 100%. Therefore, the initial time of concentration is limited (see Table 3-2).

The Rational Method procedure included in the original Hydrology Manual (1971) and Design and Procedure Manual (1968) included a 10 minute value to be added to the initial time of concentration developed through the Kirpich Formula (see Figure 3-4) for a natural watershed. That procedure is superseded by the procedure above to use Table 3-2 or Figure 3-3 to determine T_i for the appropriate sheet flow length of the initial subarea. The values for natural watersheds given in Table 3-2 vary from 13 to 7 minutes, depending on slope. If the total length of the initial subarea is greater than the maximum length allowable based on Table 3-2, add the travel time based on the Kirpich formula for the remaining length of the initial subarea.

3.1.4.2 Travel Time

The T_t is the time required for the runoff to flow in a watercourse (e.g., swale, channel, gutter, pipe) or series of watercourses from the initial subarea to the point of interest. The T_t is computed by dividing the length of the flow path by the computed flow velocity. Since the velocity normally changes as a result of each change in flow rate or slope, such as at an inlet or grade break, the total T_t must be computed as the sum of the T_t 's for each section of the flow path. Use Figure 3-6 to estimate time of travel for street gutter flow. Velocity in a channel can be estimated by using the nomograph shown in Figure 3-7 (Manning's Equation Nomograph).

- (a) Natural Watersheds – This includes rural, ranch, and agricultural areas with natural channels. Obtain T_1 directly from the Kirpich nomograph in Figure 3-4 or from the equation. This nomograph requires values for length and change in elevation along the effective slope line for the subarea. See Figure 3-5 for a representation of the effective slope line.

This nomograph is based on the Kirpich formula, which was developed with data from agricultural watersheds ranging from 1.25 to 112 acres in area, 350 to 4,000 feet in length, and 2.7 to 8.8% slope (Kirpich, 1940). A maximum length of 4,000 feet should be used for the subarea length. Typically, as the flow length increases, the depth of flow will increase, and therefore it is considered a concentration of flow at points beyond lengths listed in Figure 3-2. However, because the Kirpich formula has been shown to be applicable for watersheds up to 4,000 feet in length (Kirpich, 1940), a subarea may be designated with a length up to 4,000 feet provided the topography and slope of the natural channel are generally uniform.

Justification needs to be included with this calculation showing that the watershed will remain natural forever. Examples include areas located in the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), areas designated as open space or rural in a community's General Plan, and Cleveland National Forest.

- (b) Urban Watersheds - Flow through a closed conduit where no additional flow can enter the system during the travel, length, velocity and T_1 are determined using the peak flow in the conduit. In cases where the conduit is not closed and additional flow from a contributing subarea is added to the total flow during travel (e.g., street flow in a gutter), calculation of velocity and T_1 is performed using an assumed average flow based on the total area (including upstream subareas) contributing to the point of interest. The Manning equation is usually used to determine velocity. Discharges for small watersheds typically range from 2 to 3 cfs per acre, depending on land use, drainage area, and slope and rainfall intensity.

Note: The MRM should be used to calculate the peak discharge when there is a junction from independent subareas into the drainage system.

3.2 DEVELOPING INPUT DATA FOR THE RATIONAL METHOD

This section describes the development of the necessary data to perform RM calculations. Section 3.3 describes the RM calculation process. Input data for calculating peak flows and T_c 's with the RM should be developed as follows:

1. On a topographic base map, outline the overall drainage area boundary, showing adjacent drains, existing and proposed drains, and overland flow paths.
2. Verify the accuracy of the drainage map in the field.
3. Divide the drainage area into subareas by locating significant points of interest. These divisions should be based on topography, soil type, and land use. Ensure that an appropriate first subarea is delineated. For natural areas, the first subarea flow path length should be less than or equal to 4,000 feet plus the overland flow length (Table 3-2). For developed areas, the initial subarea flow path length should be consistent with Table 3-2. The topography and slope within the initial subarea should be generally uniform.
4. Working from upstream to downstream, assign a number representing each subarea in the drainage system to each point of interest. Figure 3-8 provides guidelines for node numbers for geographic information system (GIS)-based studies.
5. Measure each subarea in the drainage area to determine its size in acres (A).
6. Determine the length and effective slope of the flow path in each subarea.
7. Identify the soil type for each subarea.