



INSTALLATION GUIDE

1. PURPOSE

This manual is intended to serve as a guide for the proper installation and construction of a Redi-Rock® retaining wall. The recommendations and guidelines presented here are intended to supplement detailed construction documents, plans, and specifications for the project.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Redi-Rock supports a Total Quality Management approach to Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) in the planning, design, manufacture, installation, and final acceptance of a Redi-Rock wall. This approach requires the responsible party at each stage of the project ensure that proper procedures are followed for their portion of the work. The responsible parties during the construction phase of a Redi-Rock wall include the Contractor, Engineer or Owner's Representative, and Redi-Rock licensed manufacturer. Their specific responsibilities for compliance are as follows:

CONTRACTOR

The Contractor is responsible for providing construction according to the contract documents, plans, and specifications for the project. The Contractor shall ensure that employees engaged in construction of the Redi-Rock wall understand and follow the project plans and specifications, are familiar with construction methods required, and have adequate safety training.

ENGINEER OR OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE

The Engineer or Owner's Representative is responsible for construction review to assure that the project is being constructed according to the contract documents (plans and specifications). The representative shall fully understand the project plans and specifications and shall perform adequate field verification checks to ensure construction is in conformance with the project requirements. The presence of the Engineer or Owner's representative does not relieve the Contractor of their responsibilities for compliance with the project plans and specifications.

REDI-ROCK LICENSED MANUFACTURER

Redi-Rock blocks are produced by independently-owned licensed manufacturers. The manufacturer is responsible for the production and delivery of Redi-Rock units to the job site in accordance with published material quality, size tolerances, construction documents, plans, and specifications. The licensed manufacturer is responsible for adherence to any project specific QA/QC requirements for the production of precast concrete retaining wall units. Often, additional services—such as installation training classes—are available through the Redi-Rock manufacturer.

3. PRE-CONSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

Before you start construction of a Redi-Rock wall, take the time to complete necessary planning and preparation. This process will help ensure a safe, efficient, and quality installation. It will also help avoid costly mistakes.

SAFETY

Safety is of primary concern to Redi-Rock International. Redi-Rock walls must be installed in a safe manner. All local, state, and federal safety regulations must be followed. In addition, Redi-Rock International greatly encourages installers to set up company programs to help their people stay safe at work. These programs should address items such as: personal protective equipment, maintaining safe slopes and excavations, fall protection, rigging and lifting, and other safety precautions. Safety-training materials specific to your company can be found at www.osha.gov, by calling 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), or from your local government safety office.

ENGINEERING AND PERMITS

Obtain necessary engineering and permits for your project. Your local building department is an excellent resource to help determine the requirements for your project.

This installation guide is intended to supplement a detailed, site-specific wall design prepared for your project by a Professional Engineer. The construction documents for your project supersede any recommendations presented here.

REVIEW THE PROJECT PLANS

Take the time to review and understand the project plans and specifications. Make sure that the plans take into account current site, soil, and water conditions. Pay close attention to silty or clayey soils and ground water or surface water on the site as these can significantly increase the forces on the wall. A pre-construction meeting with the wall design engineer, construction inspector, wall contractor, and owner or representative is recommended.

CONSTRUCTION PLANNING

Develop a plan to coordinate construction activities on your site. Make sure your plan specifically addresses how to control surface water during construction.

UTILITY LOCATION

Make sure to have underground utilities located and marked on the ground before starting any construction. Call 8-1-1, go online to www.call811.com, or contact your local utility company to schedule utility marking for your project site.

□ MATERIAL STAGING

Store Redi-Rock blocks in a location close to the proposed wall. Blocks should be kept clean and mud free. Blocks should also be stored in a location which will minimize the amount of handling on the project site.

Store geogrid in a clean, dry location close to the proposed wall. Keep the geogrid covered and avoid exposure to direct sunlight.

Be careful where you stockpile excavation and backfill material. Do not stockpile material over buried utility pipes, cables, or near basement walls which could be damaged by the extra weight.

□ MATERIAL VERIFICATION

Material planned for use as drainage aggregate between and behind Redi-Rock blocks and structural backfill material proposed for use in the reinforced soil zone of mechanically stabilized earth walls must be inspected and verified to comply with requirements of the construction documents, plans, and specifications.

□ EQUIPMENT

Make sure you have the proper equipment to handle Redi-Rock blocks and install the wall. Redi-Rock blocks are quite large and heavy. Make sure excavators and other construction equipment are properly sized to handle the blocks safely. **(Figure 1)**

Hand-operated equipment should include, at a minimum: shovels, 2-foot (0.6-meter) level, 4-foot (1.2-meter) level, broom, hammer, tape measure, string, spray paint, laser level, pry or Burke bar, walk-behind vibratory plate compactor (capable of delivering a minimum of 2000 lb (8.9 kN) centrifugal force), and a 16-inch (406-millimeter) concrete cut-off saw. **(Figure 2)**

Personal protective equipment should include, at a minimum: appropriate clothing, steel toe boots with metatarsal protection, eye protection, hard hat, gloves, hearing protection, fall protection rigging, and other items as necessary to ensure a safe working environment.



Figure 1

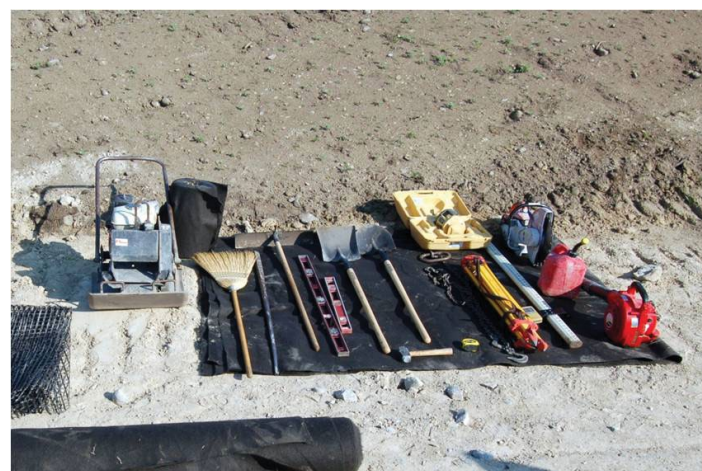


Figure 2

4. SUBGRADE SOILS

Proper base preparation is a critical element in the construction of your retaining wall. Not only is it important to provide a stable foundation for the wall, but a properly prepared base will greatly increase the speed and efficiency of your wall installation. Proper base preparation starts with the subgrade soils.

Existing soils must be removed to the bottom of the leveling pad elevation for the retaining wall.

The base and back of excavation should expose fresh, undisturbed soil or rock. Remove all organic, unsuitable, and disturbed soils that “fall-in” along the base of the wall or the back of the excavation. Always provide safe excavations in accordance with OSHA requirements.

The subgrade soil (below the leveling pad) should be evaluated by the Engineer or Owner’s Representative to verify that it meets the design requirements and to determine its adequacy to support the retaining wall. Any unsuitable material shall be excavated and replaced as directed by the on-site representative and per the requirements of the contract drawings, plans, and specifications.

Subgrade soils must be compacted to a density as specified in the contract documents, plans, and specifications but not less than 90% maximum density at $\pm 2\%$ optimum moisture content as determined by a modified proctor test (ASTM D1557). **(Figures 3 and 4)**

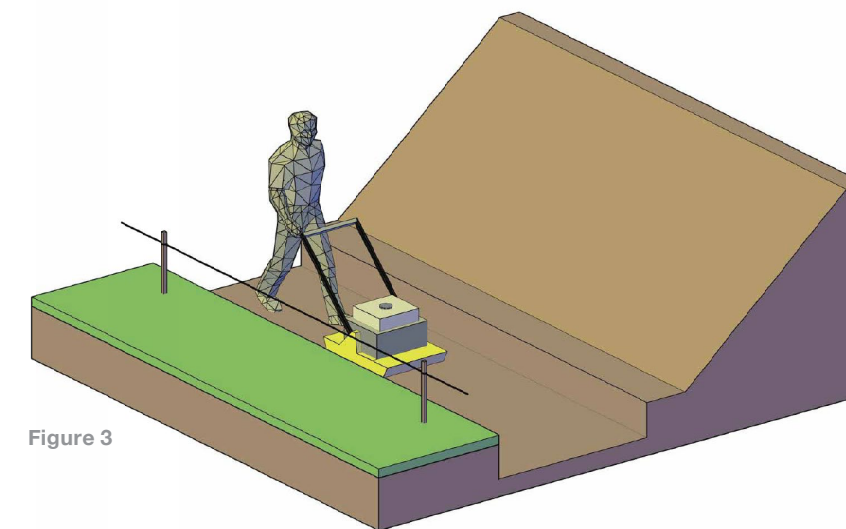


Figure 3

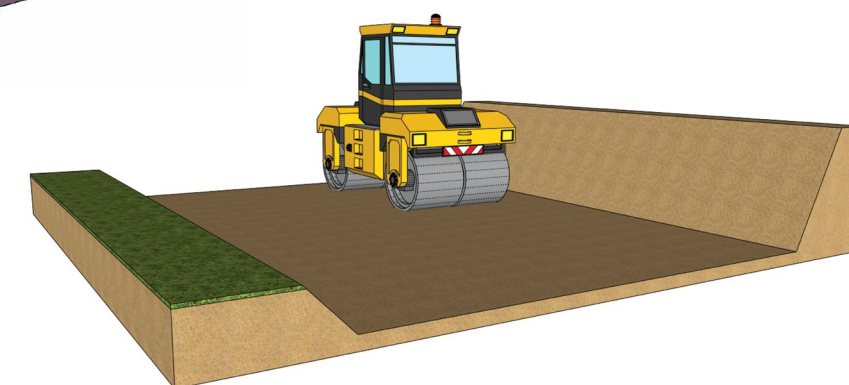


Figure 4

5. LEVELING PAD

Base preparation continues with proper leveling pad construction. Redi-Rock retaining walls can be designed with an open-graded crushed stone, dense-graded crushed stone (GAB), or concrete leveling pad which supports the bottom row of blocks. The choice of which type of leveling pad to use is made by the wall design engineer and depends on several factors including the bearing capacity of the native soil, location of the drain outlet, and conditions at the base of the wall.

Open-graded crushed stone is typically used in cases where the wall drain can outlet to daylight (by gravity) somewhere below the elevation of the bottom of the leveling pad. **(Figure 6A)** The material should be 1-inch (25-millimeter) diameter and smaller stone. A crushed stone meeting the gradation requirements of ASTM No. 57 with no material passing the No. 200 (74 μ m) sieve is preferred. The leveling pad thickness shall be as designed by the wall design engineer. A minimum thickness of 6 inches (152 millimeters) or 12 inches (305 millimeters) is common. The leveling pad should extend at least 6 inches (152 millimeter) in front and 12 inches (305 millimeters) behind the bottom block. Make sure to check your construction documents for details.

Dense-graded crushed stone or graded aggregate base (GAB) material is typically used in cases where the wall drain can only outlet to daylight somewhere above the bottom of the leveling pad. **(Figure 6B)** The material should be dense-graded crushed stone with between 8 and 20% “fines” which will pass through a No. 200 (74 μ m) sieve. The leveling pad thickness shall be as designed by the wall design engineer. Minimum dimensions are the same as those for an open-graded crushed stone leveling pad.

The leveling pad material should be placed and compacted to provide a uniform, level pad on which to construct the retaining wall. **(Figure 5)** Proper elevation can be established with a laser level or transit. You can also set two 20' (6 m) long grade (screed) pipes to the desired grade and screed the crushed stone material between the pipes.



Figure 5

Place the stone leveling pad in uniform loose lifts a maximum of 6 inches (152 millimeter) thick. Consolidate the stone with a minimum of three passes with a 24-inch (610-millimeter) wide walk-behind vibrating plate compactor capable of delivering at least 2000 pounds (8.9 kN) of centrifugal force. This should achieve 85% relative density of the stone determined in accordance with ASTM D-4253 and D-4254. In place density of the stone fill should be confirmed using ASTM D-6938. If you don't achieve a minimum of 85% relative density, place the stone in smaller lifts or apply more compaction effort until you do achieve desired density of the stone.

Unless specifically included in the design calculations, do NOT place a thin layer of sand between the leveling pad and bottom block. This layer will reduce the sliding resistance between the leveling pad and bottom block.

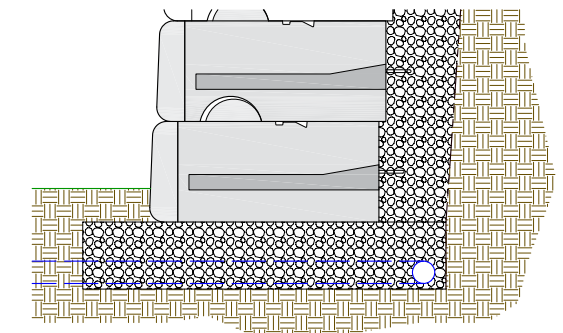
In some cases, the wall design requires the construction of a concrete leveling pad. **(Figures 6C and 6D)** Construct the leveling pad according to the detailed plans for your project.

Some designs require a shear key in the bottom of the footing and/or a lip in front of the Redi-Rock blocks. These items would be shown in the project plans.

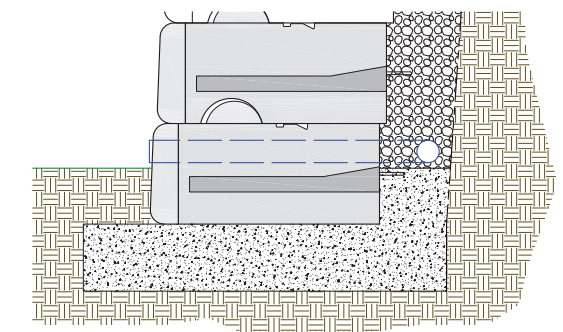
If steel rebar is to be placed in the footing, secure the bars together with wire ties in the pattern shown in the construction documents. Use rebar supports to hold the rebar structure in the proper position in the footing.

Place wood formwork at the front and back of the concrete leveling pad or footing. The top of the formwork should be placed at the elevation of the top of the concrete footing so you can screed the top smooth in preparation for block placement. It is important that the top surface be smooth and level for full contact of the retaining wall blocks. Place concrete as specified in the wall design. Once the concrete has been allowed to cure to the minimum specified strength, place the bottom blocks and continue construction of the retaining wall.

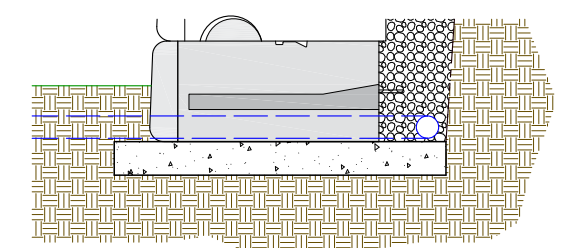
Figure 6



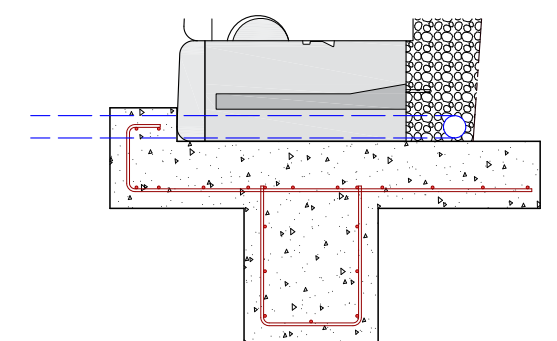
A. Open Graded Stone Leveling Pad



B. Dense Graded Stone Leveling Pad



C. Lean Concrete Leveling Pad



D. Reinforced Concrete Leveling Pad

6. SETTING THE BOTTOM ROW OF WALL BLOCKS

Redi-Rock blocks are typically delivered to the construction site using a flatbed trailer or boom truck. **(Figure 7)** Rubber tired backhoes, loaders, skid steers, or excavators are used to set the retaining wall blocks. **(Figure 8)** Make sure to use the proper sized equipment to handle the large blocks. All lifting chains, rigging, or slings must be OSHA compliant and safety rated for proper working loads.

Properly mark the location of the retaining wall. A string line or offset stakes are typically used to establish horizontal and vertical alignment. If offset stakes are used, the stakes should be placed at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) but no more than 10 feet (3 meters) in front of the face of the retaining wall. A stake should be provided at every elevation change and at a maximum of 50 feet (15 meters) apart.

Wall construction should start at a fixed point such as a building wall, 90° corner, or at the lowest elevation of the wall.

Place the blocks on the prepared leveling pad. Blocks shall be placed in full contact with the leveling pad and other immediately adjacent block units. **(Figure 9)** Block alignment should be established by lining up the “form line” where the face texture meets the steel form finished area at the top of the block, approximately 5 inches (127 millimeters) back from the front face. **(Figure 10)**

Check all blocks for level and alignment as they are placed. Small adjustments to the block location can be made with a large pry or Burke bar. Proper installation of the bottom block course is critical to maintaining the proper installation of all subsequent block courses within acceptable construction tolerance. It also makes installation of the upper rows of blocks much easier and more efficient.

Place and compact backfill in front of the bottom block course prior to placement of subsequent block courses or backfill. This will keep the blocks in place as drainage aggregate and backfill are placed and compacted.



Figure 7



Figure 8

Place an 18 inch x 12 inch (457 millimeter x 305 millimeter) piece of non-woven geotextile fabric in the vertical joint between the blocks to prevent the drainage aggregate and backfill material from migrating through the vertical joints between blocks. **(Figure 11)**

Place washed drainstone or open-graded crushed stone backfill between blocks and at least 12 inch (305 millimeter) behind the wall. A stone meeting the gradation requirements of ASTM No. 57 with no material passing the No. 200 (74 µm) sieve is preferred. Place the stone in uniform loose lifts a maximum of 6 inches (157 millimeter) thick. Consolidate the stone with a minimum of three passes with a 24-inch (610 millimeter) wide, walk-behind, vibrating plate compactor capable of delivering at least 2000 lb (8.9 kN) of centrifugal force. **(Figure 12)** This should achieve 85% relative density of the stone determined in accordance with ASTM D-4253 and D-4254. In place density of the stone fill should be confirmed using ASTM D-6938. If you don't achieve a minimum of 85% relative density, place the stone in smaller lifts or apply more compaction effort until you do achieve desired density of the stone.

Place non-woven geotextile fabric between the drainstone and the remaining backfill material if specified.

Backfill behind the drainage aggregate with material as specified in the project construction documents. Place the lifts as specified, but not to exceed 9 inches (229 millimeter) maximum. Granular backfill shall be compacted to a minimum of 90% maximum density at ± 2% optimum moisture content as determined by a modified proctor test (ASTM D1557). Use proper equipment to insure complete compaction of the backfill material. It may be necessary to wet or dry the backfill material, place the material in smaller lifts, and/or apply more compaction effort to reach 90% maximum density. Do not use any organic, topsoil, frozen, soft, wet, or loose soils when backfilling the wall.

Re-check all units for level and alignment and sweep the top of each course of blocks clean before starting construction of the next course.

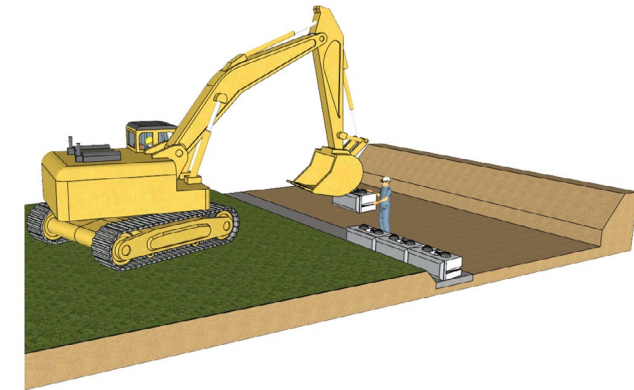


Figure 9

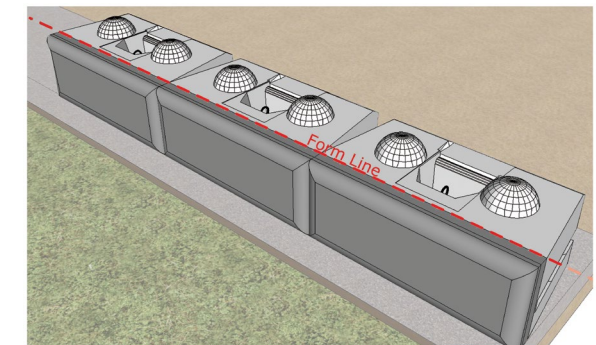


Figure 10

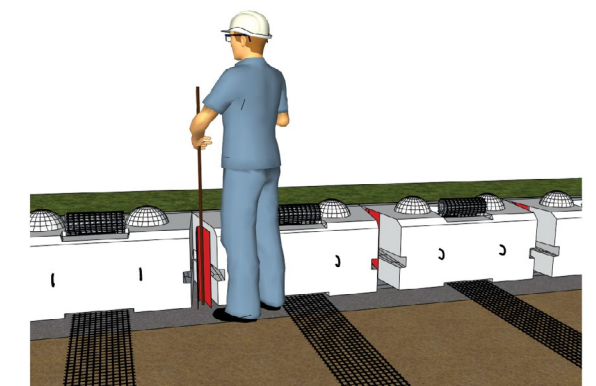


Figure 11

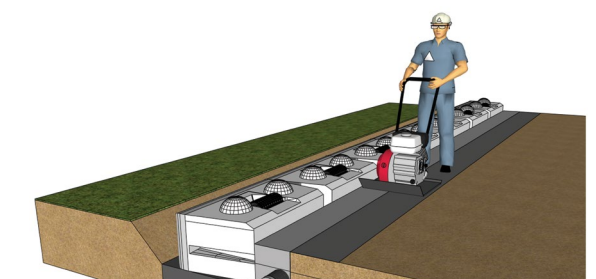


Figure 12

7. INSTALLING THE WALL DRAIN

A drain is placed behind the Redi-Rock wall blocks at the lowest elevation where the pipe can safely outlet to daylight. Drainage aggregate should be placed to the bottom of the drain as shown in the construction documents. A 4-inch (102 millimeter) perforated sock drain is commonly used for the drain pipe. Often the drain is encapsulated with drainage aggregate and wrapped with a non-woven geotextile fabric. The drain should run the entire length of the wall and needs to have proper outlets on the ends and at regularly spaced points along the wall. Solid pipe should be used for weep hole outlets through the face or under the retaining wall. **(Figure 13)**

Care needs to be taken during installation to avoid crushing or damaging the drain pipe or outlets.

8. SETTING UPPER ROWS OF WALL BLOCKS

Once the backfill is fully placed and compacted for the block course below, place the next row of blocks in a running bond configuration with the vertical joint of the lower block units centered under the mid-point of the block units above. If needed, a half block can be used at the end of every other row to maintain a running bond. **(Figure 14)**

Push the Redi-Rock blocks forward until the groove on the bottom of the block comes in full contact with the knobs on the blocks below. Adjacent blocks shall be placed with their front edges tightly abutted together.

Place non-woven geotextile fabric in the vertical joint between the blocks, and place and compact the drainage aggregate and backfill material the same way you did for the bottom row.

Never install more than one course of blocks without placing and compacting drainage aggregate and backfill to the full height of the block units. Placing multiple courses of blocks without backfill will prevent the proper placement and consolidation of the drainage aggregate between the blocks.

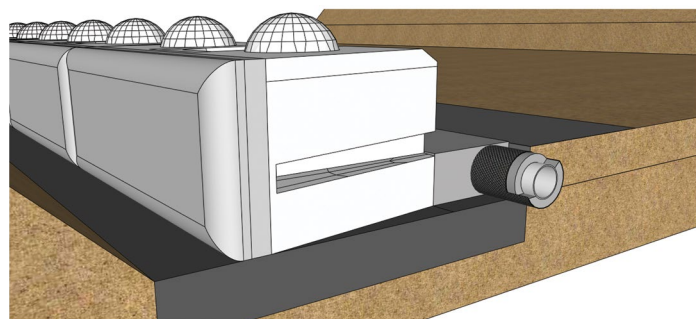


Figure 13

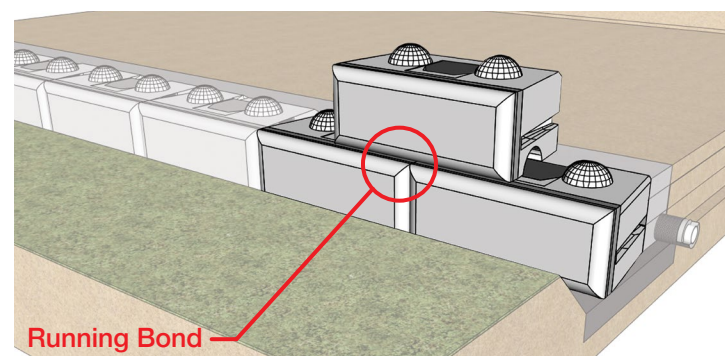


Figure 14

9. INSTALLING GEOGRID FOR MECHANICALLY STABILIZED EARTH WALLS

Redi-Rock blocks are designed to allow you to build relatively tall non-reinforced (or gravity) walls which use the weight of the blocks to provide stability. However, for some projects you may need to build even taller walls. In these cases, mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) retaining walls can be built with the Redi-Rock Positive Connection (PC) System.

The geogrid used in Redi-Rock PC System walls are 12-inch (305-millimeter) wide strips of PVC coated polyester geogrid that wrap through a vertical core slot cast into the block and extend full length into the reinforced soil zone on both the top and bottom of the block.

It is critical that you only use factory cut strips of Mirafi geogrid that are certified by TenCate Mirafi for width and strength. Field cutting strips of geogrid from larger rolls can significantly degrade the capacity of the wall system and is not allowed. Geogrid strips are only available through a Redi-Rock Manufacturer. (Figure 15)

Verify that you have the correct geogrid material and then cut the individual strips to the required length. The distance a geogrid strip must extend into the reinforced soil zone (design length) is measured from the back of the block to the end of the geogrid. Since the geogrid wraps through the block, the actual cut length of a given geogrid strip is two (2) times the design length plus enough additional geogrid to wrap through the block. For the Redi-Rock 28-inch (710-millimeter) PC blocks, the cut length is two (2) times the design length plus 3 feet (0.9 meters).

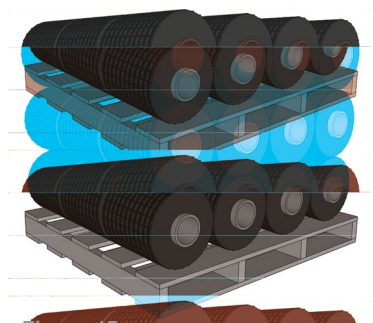


Figure 15

Inspect the Redi-Rock PC blocks for any concrete flashing or sharp edges in the slot and groove through the block. Remove any flashing and grind smooth any sharp edges which could damage the geogrid reinforcement.

Place the geogrid strip in the vertical core slot from the bottom of the block and pull approximately half of the length of the strip up through the core slot. Measure from the back of the block unit to the required design length and pin the bottom leg of the geogrid strip with staples, stakes, or other appropriate methods. Pull the geogrid strip tight to remove any slack, wrinkles, or folds. Secure the geogrid firmly in place by putting a pin through the geogrid and the steel lifting insert which is located in the recessed area on the top of the PC block **(Figure 16)** or placing drainage aggregate in the vertical core slot.

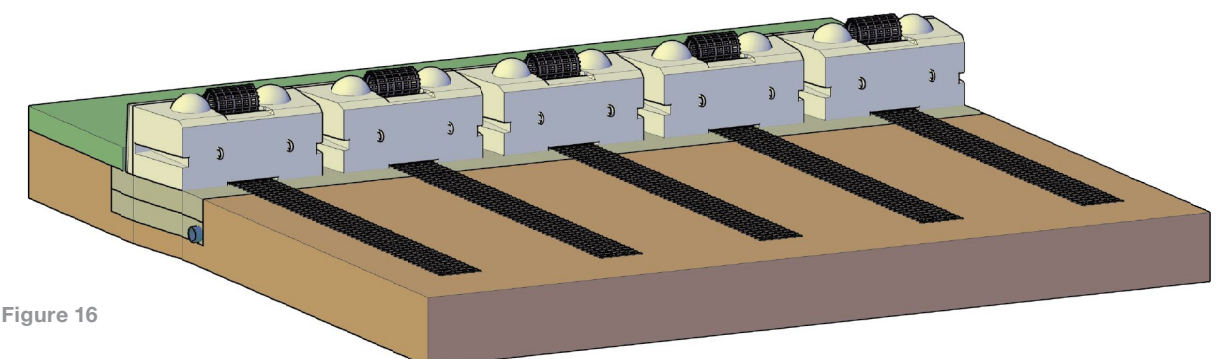


Figure 16

Place drainage aggregate between and behind the blocks. **(Figure 17)** Place the stone in uniform loose lifts as required in the project plans and specifications. Consolidate the stone between the blocks by hand tamping. Make sure to tamp stone into the ends of the groove on the bottom of the Redi-Rock PC blocks. Consolidate the stone behind the blocks with a minimum of three passes with a 24-inch (610-millimeter) wide walk-behind vibrating plate compactor capable of delivering at least 2000 lb (8.9 kN) of centrifugal force. Provide further compaction if needed to meet the density specified in the contract documents, but not less than 85% relative density of the stone determined in accordance with ASTM D-4253 and D-4254.

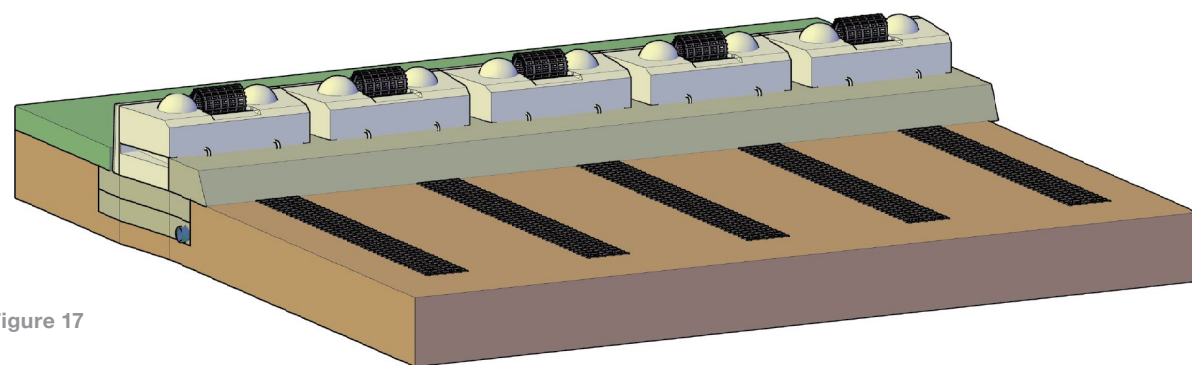


Figure 17

Place a strip of non-woven geotextile fabric between the drainage aggregate and the reinforced soil zone if specified.

Place the reinforced soil zone material in uniform loose lifts as required in the project plans and specifications. Reinforced soil zone material must be compacted to a density as specified in the contract documents, plans, and specifications but not less than 90% maximum density as determined by a modified proctor test (ASTM D1557).

Begin compaction at the back of the wall blocks and proceed to the embedded end of the geogrid strip using care to maintain the reinforcement strip in a level, taut condition oriented perpendicular to the back of the block unit to which it is attached.

Use hand operated compaction equipment within 3 feet (1 meter) of the back of the PC blocks. Heavier equipment can be used beyond 3 feet (1 meter) away from the PC blocks. Tracked construction equipment must not be operated directly on the geogrid strip reinforcement. A minimum fill thickness of 6 inches (150 millimeter) is required for the operation of tracked vehicles over the geogrid strips. Turning of tracked vehicles should be kept to a minimum to prevent displacement of the fill and the geogrid strips. Rubber-tired vehicles may pass over the geogrid strips at a slow speed of less than 5 mph (8 km/hr). Sudden breaking and sharp turning should be avoided.

After placing and properly compacting backfill to the elevation of the geogrid strip at the top of the block, extend the top leg of the geogrid strip to the design length required. Pull the geogrid strip tight to remove any slack, wrinkles, or folds. **(Figure 18)** Pin the top leg of the geogrid strip with staples, stakes, or other appropriate methods to hold it in place and keep the geogrid strip taut.

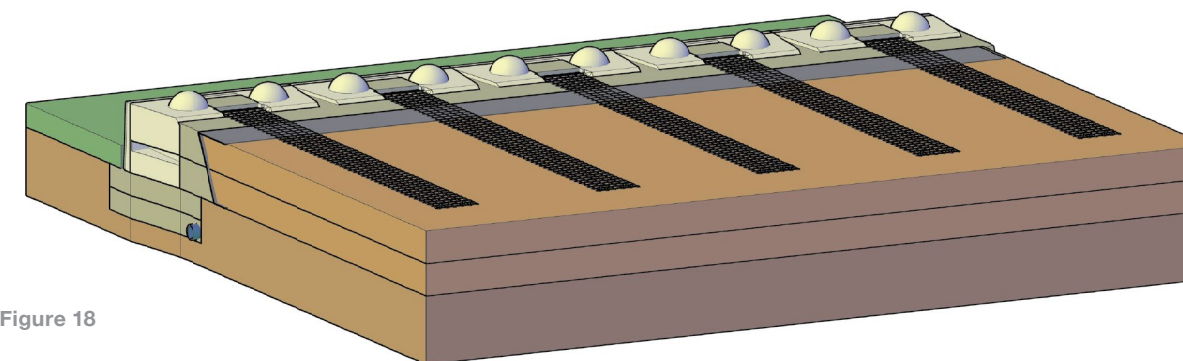


Figure 18

Fill the center slot in the PC blocks with drainage aggregate. Be careful to keep the grid flat against the back of the slot in the PC block and prevent any stone from lodging between the geogrid and the concrete block. Fill the vertical core slot completely with drainage aggregate. Consolidate the drainage aggregate by hand tamping. Use a broom to sweep clean the top of the blocks. Do not operate a walk behind vibratory plate compactor on top of the Redi-Rock PC blocks.

Place retained soil immediately between the end of the reinforced soil zone (identified as the embedded end of the geogrid reinforcement strips) and the back of the excavation. Compact retained soil to a density as specified in the contract documents, plans, and specifications but not less than 90% maximum density at $\pm 2\%$ optimum moisture content as determined by a modified proctor test (ASTM D1557). Maximum differential elevation between the reinforced fill and the retained soil fill should never exceed 18 inches (457 millimeters).

Continue construction in a similar fashion to the top of the wall. **(Figure 19)**

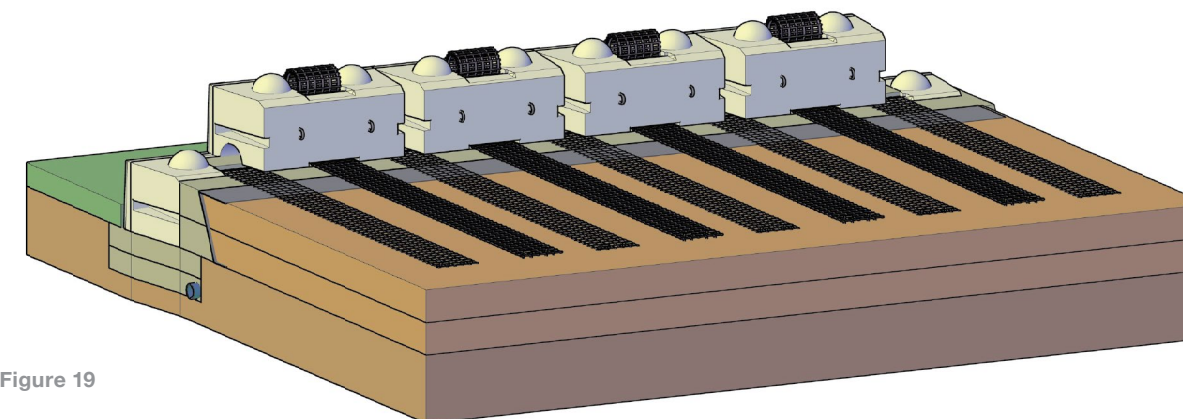


Figure 19