

There are many advantages to maintaining a natural shoreline. Trees and shrubs provide wildlife habitat, shade for fish and privacy for the landowner. They create a natural buffer that helps protect the water body from erosion and sedimentation when it rains. Manicured lawns, on the other hand, seldom provide this protection. If they are fertilized, heavy rains carry nutrients directly into the lake. The cumulative effect of many lawns along a lake shore will adversely affect water quality, fish, wildlife and esthetics.

CAN I FILL IN A LOW, SWAMPY AREA ON MY SHORELAND PROPERTY?

Wetlands merit special protection under shoreland zoning. They provide wildlife habitat, fish spawning grounds, and serve as a filter to prevent water pollution and help control flooding problems. Wetlands are seldom suitable as building sites because they flood frequently and can't adequately support roads or building foundations. A permit is needed to fill any area that is a wetland. If there is a practicable alternative to filling the wetland, the permit can almost never be granted.

CAN I PROTECT MY SHORELINE FROM EROSION?

Yes, there are many options for reasonable shoreline protection. Since this usually involves placing materials on the bed of a waterway, a permit from the DNR is necessary. Check with both your zoning administrator and the DNR for recommendations and permits.

CAN I REMODEL OR ADD TO MY EXISTING COTTAGE?

County permits are required for any work above ordinary maintenance such as painting. To find out if your project needs a permit or meets the standards, contact the county zoning office.

HOW DO I OBTAIN APPROVALS FOR MY PROJECT?

Before planning the project know and understand your county's shoreland zoning rules. Contact the local zoning office.

WHAT IF I SEE A PROJECT THAT MAY BE AFFECTING THE LAKE OR STREAM?

Promptly get the information to your local zoning administrator or DNR office so that the situation can be resolved before the project goes too far and damages property or the waterbody. When you call you will need to provide:

- An address, fire number, map or directions
- Description of the activity
- Name of the property owner

The zoning administrator can tell you if a violation has occurred, and if so, what steps will be taken. Correcting a violation can be a lengthy process, especially if the landowner is unwilling to correct the problem voluntarily.

What the LANDOWNER Needs to Know



For more information
find your local contact at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/county.htm>



SHORELAND
WETLAND
Zoning

Wisconsin's lakes, streams and rivers are one of our state's greatest natural assets. As a waterfront property owner, a fisherman, a state park visitor, or even a walker along one of our renowned riverwalks, the impacts of development along these waterways can be seen. Wisconsin citizens value our clean water, our canoeable streams, and the natural scenic beauty of our wooded shoreline habitats. Every county in this state has a shoreland zoning ordinance that helps protect these valuable shoreland resources through a system of regulations that require permits for activities near the lakes and rivers.

Shoreland zoning regulations promote wise use of lands surrounding our lakes and streams. Protecting and enhancing our waters is so essential to our economy and way of life that Wisconsin was one of the first states to require shoreland zoning.

WHAT AREAS DOES THIS SHORELAND ZONING REGULATION APPLY?

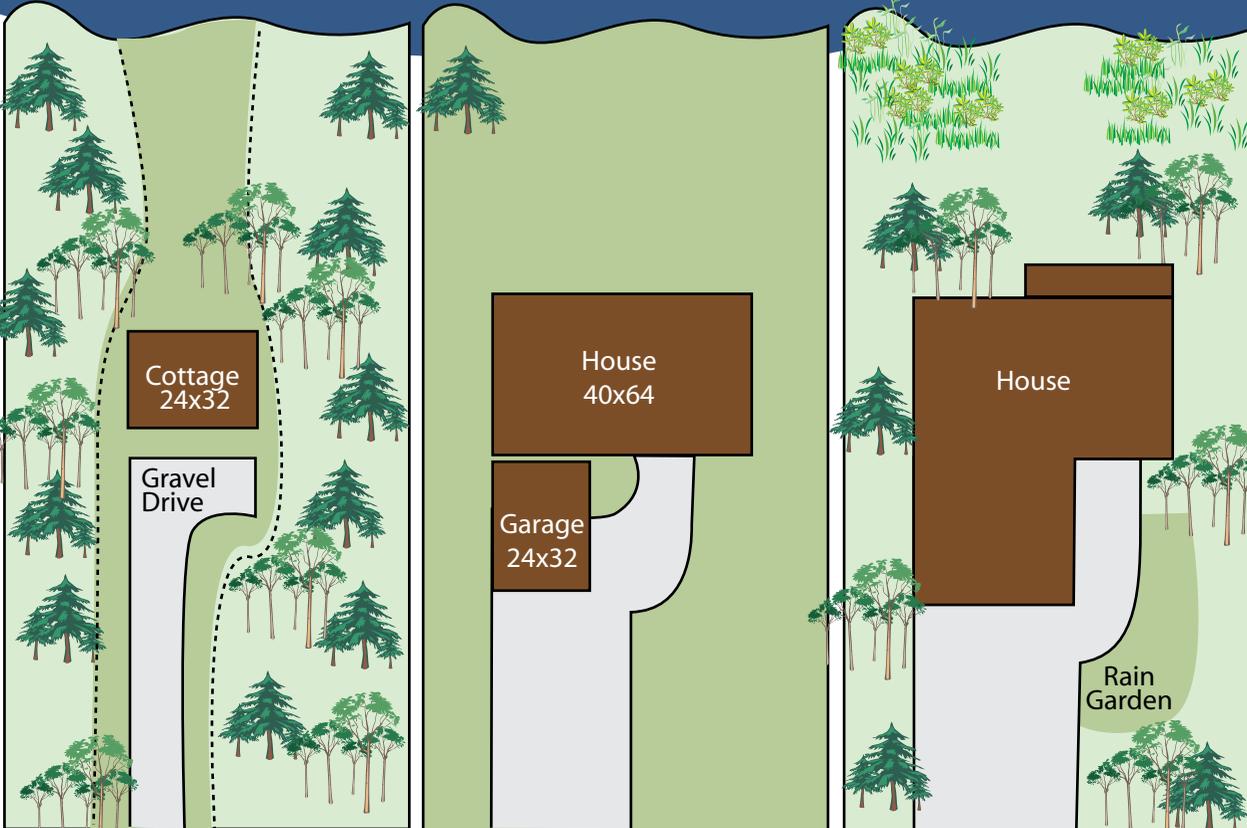
- All land within 1000' of lakes, ponds, or flowages
- All lands within 300' of river or streams or the extent of the floodplain, whichever is greater
- All shoreland areas in unincorporated areas
- Only shoreland wetlands in cities or villages

SHORELAND ZONING REGULATES LAND USE AND CONSTRUCTION

Each county has adopted regulations that meet or exceed minimum state standards to protect water quality, natural scenic beauty, recreation, navigation, and fish and wildlife. These regulations include:

- Setbacks for structures from property lines and waterways.
- Minimum lot sizes and land division review.
- Restrictions on cutting of shoreline vegetation.
- Standards for earth moving activities.
- Protection for shoreland-wetlands.
- Regulation of septic system and wells.
- Restrictions on improvements to older structures or uses that don't meet the shoreland standards.

Although many waterfront properties haven't changed ownership over time, the development on those family-owned parcels has changed. In the past, the small cottages seemed to blend right into the surrounding landscape. Today's families are spending more time at the lake, have more outdoor gear and have changed that surrounding landscape. For the future, waterfront property owners are learning that the benefits of natural vegetation include more and better wildlife viewing, better fishing, and better water quality in that lake or river.



CAN I INSTALL A WALKWAY OR STAIRS TO ACCESS THE WATER?

Yes, most counties have some type of permitting system to allow reasonable access to the water. The permit process helps assure that projects are designed to reduce erosion during and after excavation. Generally, you'll be required to:

- Avoid sensitive areas like wetlands and steep slopes.
- Replant quickly.
- Keep runoff away from exposed areas.
- Provide a stable slope.
- Implement any erosion control measures specifically prescribed for your site.

CAN I BUILD A BOATHOUSE NEAR THE SHORELINE?

Each county has some regulation concerning boathouses that may limit where they can be placed or how large they can be. Talk to your local county zoning administrator to find out what specific regulations are in place in your county.

DO I NEED A PERMIT TO CUT VEGETATION ALONG THE SHORELINE?

Each county regulates vegetation removal. Some counties will require permits for clearing trees and brush and some will require a vegetation management plan to exceed certain limits.