



## DANE COUNTY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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### Building Season is Here and New Shoreland Regulations are in Effect.

The snow is gone, the ground is thawed, and many are itching to start building, construction or renovation projects. The Dane County Department of Planning and Development reminds you to call before you build. In response to state code amendments, Dane County has changed its regulations for projects near waterways. If you're planning a construction project near water in unincorporated towns, please contact the Zoning Division as early in the process as possible. County staff can help determine what permits you will need and help you avoid surprises.

Shoreland zoning changes apply to properties within 300 feet of any navigable water. Under state law, "navigable waters" include all lakes, ponds, rivers and even intermittent streams that may only carry water once a year. Some key changes from last year:

- *Impervious Surface Area Caps.* Hard surfaces, gravel driveways, walkways, patios and rooftops are limited to 15% of the lot, or 30% of the lot with mitigation (see below). There are some exceptions for modifications to existing impervious surfaces, even if they exceed these limits.
- *Vegetative Buffer Zone.* The new ordinance prohibits removal of existing natural vegetation within the first 35 feet from the water. The ordinance makes allowances for maintenance of existing lawn or landscaping, a "viewing and access corridor" to get to the water, agriculture and conservation activities.
- *Existing buildings and lots.* Previously, landowners with older, smaller lots or buildings too close to the water to meet current standards needed a variance before they could do any work at all. For many projects, this is no longer the case.
- *Shoreland Mitigation Permits.* The new ordinance allows for some variation from setbacks, impervious surface limits and other standards if you are willing to install and maintain some simple practices to control stormwater and improve native vegetation near the shore. Mitigation practices must be designed and installed according to technical standards and must have a permanent maintenance plan in place and recorded with the property.

More information about county shoreland and other water resource protection regulations are available online at:

[http://www.countyofdane.com/PLANDEV/Shoreland\\_Wetland\\_Floodplain.aspx](http://www.countyofdane.com/PLANDEV/Shoreland_Wetland_Floodplain.aspx). You can also call the Dane County Zoning Division at (608) 266-4266.