



Do I Need a Permit to Build a Pond?

A pond can be an excellent addition to your property. Contact the Susquehanna County Conservation District and request a site inspection to assess what level of permitting your project may or may not require.

New Ponds

- A dam permit from DEP will be required if the dam will be built across a watercourse (i.e. stream, creek, intermittent) and:
 - ✓ The upstream drainage area exceeds 100 acres
 - ✓ OR the dam height above the existing ground elevation exceeds 15 feet
 - ✓ OR the storage capacity exceeds 50 acre-feet (pond surface area x average depth)
- A dam permit would also be needed if:
 - ✓ The dam will not be built across a watercourse but satisfies dam height and storage capacity conditions as listed above
 - ✓ OR if the pond will store a potentially dangerous liquid other than water
- An environmental assessment form must still be submitted to and accepted by DEP if the proposed dam won't require a Dam Permit, but will be located in, along or project into a wetland, exceptional value watershed or across a watercourse.
- Any excavation of wetland, watercourse or floodway areas will require an Encroachment (Joint) Permit from DEP. (If a watercourse or wetlands are present on site it will be difficult to obtain a permit and it's advisable to choose a new location)
- If earth disturbance (measured from the outside toe of the dam slope plus any associated new access roads, parking areas and pavilions, etc.) will exceed 1 acre, a NPDES permit application must be approved by our office prior to construction.
- If the pond will draw water from a watercourse a General Permit must be obtained.

Existing Ponds

- If you'd like to enlarge an existing pond diameter or increase its depth beyond original a permit will be required.
- If you'd like to dredge an existing pond to its original storage capacity, then a permit likely won't be required.
- If you plan to drain an existing pond a Drawdown Permit may need to be obtained from the PA Fish and Boat Commission at least 30 days before the draining occurs.

For both new and existing pond excavation, the disturbed soil on, in and surrounding the pond must be immediately stabilized with vegetation or other permanent cover. All principle and emergency spillway outlets must be properly stabilized with rock or other appropriately sized lining.