

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I determine if there are wetlands on a property?

Wetlands must be delineated in the field by a qualified wetland scientist. This person must have knowledge and experience with wetland plants, soils, hydrology, the MA Wetlands Protection Act, Wetland Regulations 310 CMR 10.00 and the Seekonk General Wetlands Protection Bylaw and Regulations. The Conservation Commission cannot recommend a wetland scientist but we can give you a list of contacts that provide these services.

Can I build next to wetlands?

*You **may** be able to build within 100 feet of wetlands and within 200 feet of a perennial stream if you obtain the proper permits and approvals from the Conservation Commission and all work complies with state and local wetland laws. You cannot do **anything** within 25 feet of the wetland boundary and structures are prohibited within 50 feet of the wetland boundary pursuant to the Seekonk General Wetlands Protection Bylaw and Regulations. Any proposed activity that is greater than 100 feet from the wetlands and greater than 200 feet from a perennial stream is not under the Commission's jurisdiction unless that activity causes a negative impact to the resource area.*

Why are wetlands protected?

Wetlands are very valuable resource areas and provide many functions such as the following: drinking water protection, flood control, fish and shellfish habitat, wildlife habitat, natural beauty and recreation. Wetlands contribute to public health and safety, not only for you and your family, but for your community as well. Wetlands protect drinking water, prevent storm damage and support recreation, tourism and educational opportunities.

Can I cut trees near the wetlands?

If you live near wetlands, always contact the Conservation Office at 508-336-2944 prior to cutting any trees.

I have mosquitoes in my backyard, what can I do?

*Mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk so limit your outdoor activities at these times. Wear bug repellent. Contact the Bristol County Mosquito Control for spraying - to make a spray request send an email to **RequestBristolMCP@comcast.net**.*

I have wetlands in my backyard and they are messy, can I clean them up?

*Do not attempt to clean up the wetlands. Much of what people consider "messy" is wildlife habitat. Removing invasive vegetative species from the wetlands is allowable **but** first contact the Conservation Office at 508-336-2944 to determine if it is an invasive species and to discuss the method of removal.*

Can I discharge water from my washing machine into the wetlands?

Never discharge effluent from your clothes washer or sinks into streams, ponds or wetlands. Effluent from these sources must be discharged into your septic system.

Can I pump my pool water into the wetlands?

Never pump your pool water directly into streams, ponds or wetlands. Pool water contains chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Instead, drain your pool water across your lawn or impervious area and allow the chemicals to dissipate and infiltrate before it reaches the resource areas.

Aren't wetlands considered "wastelands"?

In the past, wetlands were mistakenly regarded as "wastelands" of mud and mosquitoes or simply as obstacles to economic development. However, scientific studies have shown that wetlands protect our health, safety, and property, as well as provide habitat for a variety of wildlife.