

Planning development? Here are the steps you should take to determine if you require a permit from MVCA

How do I determine if my property is regulated?

If you live close to a lake, stream, river, valley, wetland or watercourse of any kind, please refer to our [Regulations Mapping](#) to determine if your property is regulated.

What activities require a permit?

- new construction, reconstruction, and additions or alteration to existing buildings or structures;
- site grading including placing, dumping or removal of fill or other material;
- the straightening, changing or diverting or interfering with an existing channel of a river, creek, stream, watercourse, or shoreline;
- changing or interfering with a wetland; or
- new or replacement septic systems.

For a full list of activities that require a permit, or for more information on our regulations, see our [Regulation Policies](#) document

Types of regulated features

Flood Plain

- Development within the flood plain requires written permission from MVCA prior to the initiation of development (which includes construction, site grading and the placement or removal of fill) and is subject to Section 6 of our [Regulation Policies](#).

Watercourse and Shoreline

- Written permission is required from the MVCA prior to straightening, changing, diverting or interfering in any way with the existing channel or the shoreline of a lake or watercourse.

Wetlands

- MVCA's regulations apply to all wetlands that are over 0.5 ha in size as well as the lands located within 30 meters the wetland. Development and/or interference is typically not permitted within a wetland and permission is required for any proposed development within 30 m of the wetland.

Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW)

- Development or interference in any way is not permitted within the boundaries of a Provincially Significant Wetland. Typically, new development is not permitted within 30 m of a PSW, and conditional permissions may be granted for development between 30 m and 120 m of a PSW, provided the interference with the hydrologic function of the wetland has been deemed acceptable by the MVCA. Development proposed within 120 m of a PSW may require the completion of a Hydrologic Impact Statement (HIS).

Erosion Hazard (Stable Slope and Meander Belt)

- New development and lot grading generally are not permitted in this area. However, if it is not possible to direct development outside of the erosion hazard, there is an option to have a geotechnical analysis conducted at your expense. The analysis would have to conclude that the proposed development (including septic system) could proceed safely without compromising the stability of the slope in its current configuration (i.e. the slope cannot be engineered).

Permit to take water

- Water taking is regulated by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Permit requirements depend on the volume of water to be taken. Please contact Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks 1-877-344-2011. Installation of a pump or intake unit may be considered a shoreline alteration which would require written approval from the MVCA.

How much does a permit cost?

Permit costs vary depending on the scope of the project. The fees are determined by the type of permit for which you apply. We call this our fee schedule. Please refer to the [fee schedule](#) for a detailed breakdown of permit costs. *Note that MVCA permits are valid up to a maximum of two years from the date of issuance.*

Next steps

1. Fill out the [Inquiry Form](#) to provide preliminary details about your project.
2. If you require permission for your proposal, contact MVCA Environmental Planner at (613) 253-0006 to provide specific location information so that we can provide advice on the project.
3. Fill out the [permit application](#) and obtain all necessary drawings.
4. Submit your application to MVCA, who will review your plans in consideration of provincial regulations. Please note the application can be filled out, signed digitally and emailed to MVCA (info@mvc.on.ca) using Microsoft Explorer or Adobe Acrobat Pro version 8 or newer. If you are using Adobe Acrobat Reader or DC, you can download the file and fill it manually, and then scan and email or mail.
5. Payment is required before a permit can be issued. Payment can be made via cheque, or by credit card over the phone by calling (613) 253-0006.

Permit Applications require 30 days to process; take this into account when you are planning your project's timeline. Incomplete applications can extend the permit processing timeline.

Septic systems

The principal authority for septic systems varies across the watershed. Below is a list of the principal authority for each area of the watershed.

City of Ottawa

- Contact information for the Ottawa Septic System Office (Rideau Valley Conservation Authority) can be found at <https://www.ottawasepticssystemoffice.ca/>

Tay Valley Township

- Contact MVCA at (613) 253-0006

Lanark County (except for Tay Valley)

- Contact information for Leeds Grenville Lanark District Health Unit can be found at <https://healthunit.org/>

Kingston, Frontenac County, Lennox and Addington County

- Contact information for KFL&A Public Health can be found at <https://www.kflaph.ca/en/index.aspx>

Drainage

Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA) typically use drainage swales on residential lots in flood prone areas to direct excess water away from adjacent properties and towards the waterbody. Where natural swales do not exist, grassed swales must be designed to meet a set of minimum standards. These standards are listed in Appendix C.6 of the [Regulations Policies](#) document. For more information on drainage, please see the [Drainage Fact Sheet](#)

Docks

MVCA Regulations apply to how/if the dock impacts the shoreline, flood plain, or provincially significant wetlands. For more information, please see our [Dock Policies](#).

Removing vegetation

MVCA does not regulate removing shoreline vegetation. Some municipalities have by-laws regarding the maintenance of shoreline vegetation. Please contact your local municipal office to determine if there is an applicable by-law.

Removing aquatic vegetation is regulated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Please contact them at 1-800-667-1940 or by visiting <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-natural-resources-and-forestry> or <https://www.ontario.ca/page/remove-native-aquatic-plants>

Spills and pollution

Spills and pollution are to be reported to the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks. For public pollution, contact the public pollution reporting hotline at 1-866-663-8477. For reporting regulatory spills, call 1-800-268-6060. More information on spills and pollution can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-pollution-and-spills>.

Algae Blooms

For more information on algae blooms please refer to the Lanark Leeds and Grenville Health Unit website: <https://healthunit.org/health-information/recreational-water/blue-green-algae/> or the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae>

To report a bloom please contact the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks Spill Action Hotline at 1-800-268-6060.

Who else should you call?

- the building department of your local municipality;
- your local office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry if you are proposing to do work in the water or close to the shore.
- the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for any in water works <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/index-eng.html>

Be aware that approval from the Conservation Authority does not replace building permits or any other permits issued through municipal offices or other levels of government.