



Owning Lakeshore in Douglas County

Owning lakeshore can be the most rewarding experience of a lifetime. From the peaceful sound of the lake lapping at the shore to the fabulous sunsets over the horizon, being near water is relaxing and nurturing.

The ***Douglas County Lakes Association*** wants your entire experience to be a positive one so we have compiled some of the NEED TO KNOW items regarding your lakeshore ownership responsibilities. To avoid confusion about who does what, know that the County has jurisdiction over anything from the Ordinary High Water level landward and the DNR jurisdiction is from the OHW forward.

First you must determine what the Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL) is on your lake. Your Lake Association or Julie Aadland, DNR in Fergus Falls, 218-739-7576, can help you with this. The OHWL is not where the water level is now, but rather where the DNR has established the highest level to be. Lake levels fluctuate continuously so don't trust your judgment...get the facts!

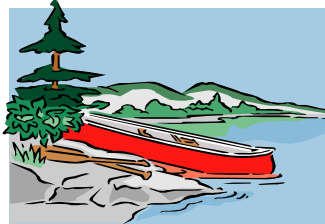
“Buyers BEWARE”

There is a little known, often violated Zoning Ordinance in Douglas County, Section V. F.5.c .This Ordinance prohibits contiguous lots owned by the same person, that do not meet today’s minimum size standards, from being sold individually, without **first** obtaining a variance.

TERMS TO KNOW

Bluff Impact Zone

The Bluff Impact Zone is the bluff and land located within 30’ of the top of the bluff. Buildings, accessory structures and walkout basements are not allowed in the bluff impact zone. This determination may be difficult, please contact the Land and Resource Department



Shore Impact Zone is defined as the area extending landward from the OHWL, half of the distance of the structure setback. This area is the most sensitive area of lake property and requires the most protection .Buildings and accessory structures are not allowed in this area.

Impervious Surface Coverage : 25% is the maximum amount of land that may be covered by surfaces that repel water. (This includes buildings, sidewalks, decks, landscaping, and driveways, gravel or otherwise, etc.)

Shoreland District: Any land within 1000’ of a lake, 300’ from a river or stream and the designated flood plain regulated by the Shoreland Management Act.

Wetlands : Wetlands are protected either by the MN DNR or the MN Wetland Conservation Act. Wetlands on your property are regulated from filling and draining and have setbacks of either 25 or 50 feet depending on the type of wetland. Wetlands could range from a depression area that might hold water for a few weeks in the spring to an open water pond. If you question if a wetland exists on your property call SWCD @ 763-3191 ext3.

PERMITS



Shoreland Alteration Permits are required for:

- Construction of retaining walls
- Repair or reconstruction of existing retaining walls
- Movement of less than ten cubic yards of fill or soil in the *impact zones* or on steep slopes
- Movement of more than fifty cubic yards of fill or soil outside of the impact zones in a residential shoreland district
- Ice ridge removal
- Sand beach area construction
- Stairs, patios, decks
- **Removal of any trees, shrubs or vegetation**



Conditional Use Permits are required for:

- Movement of more than ten cubic yards of fill or soil in the *impact zones* or on a steep slope
- Movement of more than fifty cubic yards of fill or soil outside of the impact zones in a residential shoreland district
- Retaining wall & landscape projects of 25' in length or more than 3' high.

When in doubt...check it out.

Violations carry serious consequences. After-the-Fact Permits are \$900, plus you may have to restore your land to the original condition!!

Your contractor or landscaper should be knowledgeable about the required permits!

MORE TO KNOW :

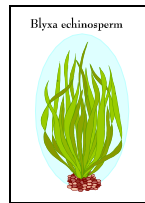
Use of a fertilizer containing phosphorus is not allowed in the State of Minnesota.

When any work is being done erosion control methods must be used to prevent erosion into public waters. All landscapers must be licensed by the County. Check first before you hire.

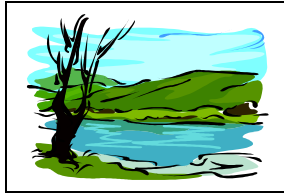
Burning is not allowed within 100 feet of the lake. Only campfires three feet across or less are allowed near the lake but in a ring to prevent ash from escaping to the lake.



Removing aquatic plants or altering shoreline will require a permit from the Minnesota DNR. Aquatic plants and natural shorelines provide habitat for fish and wildlife, help maintain water clarity and protect shorelines from erosion. While cutting a small area of submerged aquatic plants for recreational activities is allowed without a permit, the following **require** an Aquatic Plant Management Permit. Cost is \$35 and is valid for ONE YEAR:



- Using herbicides or algaecides to control aquatic plants in public waters
- Removing emergent vegetation, like bulrush, cattails or wild rice;
- Removing floating leaf vegetation, like water lilies, in an area larger than a channel 15 feet wide extending to open water
- Cutting, pulling or mechanically controlling vegetation in an area larger than 2,500 square feet or wider than 50 feet;
- Removing or relocating a bog of any size that is free floating or lodged in any area other than its original location;
- Installing or operating an automated plant control device (such as the Crary WeedRoller, Beachgroomer or Lake Sweeper). Call Glenwood DNR @320-634-4573



The Shoreland Ordinance

The complete Ordinance can be found at: www.co.douglas.mn.us

Lakes are zoned differently based on size and depth. There are three lake classifications: **general development** (largest size, lowest restrictions), **recreational development** (medium size, medium restrictions), and **natural environment** (smallest size, greatest restrictions).

Douglas County uses this classification system as a starting point, but may further restrict alterations based on the sensitivity a particular project may have on the lake system.

Minimum Lot Requirements – Riparian Lots on an Unsewered Lake						
	Gen.Dev (GDS)	Rec.Dev (RDS)	Natural Env. A-1	Natural Env. A-2	Natural Env. A-3	
Minimum Lot Size (sq ft)	20,000	40,000	80,000	80,000	90,000	
Minimum Lot Width (ft)	100	150	200	250	300	
Minimum Lot Depth (ft)	150	150	150	150	150	
Maximum building height	25	25	25	25	25	
Setback from Public Road ROW	32	32	32	32	32	
Setback Public Road Centerline	65	65	65	65	65	
Side Yard Setback (before 8/9/66)	6	6	6	6	6	
Side Yard Setback (after 8/9/66)	10	10	10	10	10	
Building Setback from Lake	75	100	150	150	150	
ISTS System Setback from Lake	75	75	150	150	150	
Impervious Surface Limit	25%	25%	20%	20%	20%	

Other Resources:

www.dnr.state.mn.us

Julie Aadland, Fergus Falls, for in-lake & shoreline alterations permits 218-739-7576

www.extension.umn.edu/shoreland

Karen Terry, 218-998-3927

Shoreline lakescaping

[www.dcswd.com /](http://www.dcswd.com/)

Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District

SWCD Jerry Haggemiller 320-762-3191 ext3

www.srwdmn.org

Sauk River Watershed District

www.minnesotawaters.org

(former Minnesota Lakes Association)

www.shorelandmanagement.org

Tips on lakescaping

www.co.douglas.mn.us/land&resource.htm

Douglas County Land & Resource Dept.

Courthouse- 306 8th Avenue,

Alexandria

320-762-3863

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