

Wetland Regulations

The Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and Wellesley's Wetland Protection Bylaw require landowners to secure permits from the Wetlands Protection Committee before doing work near a resource area. Violation of these laws result in fines that compound daily and in extreme cases, jail time.

The Law States: It is illegal to alter, clear, cut, fill, dump (anything, especially yard waste), grade, landscape or build in the following areas without a permit from the Wellesley Wetlands Protection Committee:

Wetland Resource

Areas- this includes swamps, streams, ponds, floodplains, vernal pools, and other wetlands.

100-Foot Buffer

Zones-include the upland areas next to Wetland Resource Areas.

200-Foot Riverfront

Areas-include the upland areas next to year-round streams.

In other words, if you are planning to do any work within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a stream or river you must first determine if a permit is required.

Where to Begin

If you are planning to do work on your property and live near a wetland resource area, a Wetlands Protection Committee staff member or a wetlands specialist can help you determine whether you live close enough to a wetlands resource area to require a permit. If a permit is required, you will need to:

1. Fill out and submit a wetland permit application.
2. Attend a public meeting to discuss the proposed work.
3. Resolve any of the Commission's concerns regarding the protection of wetlands and resource areas near your proposed project.

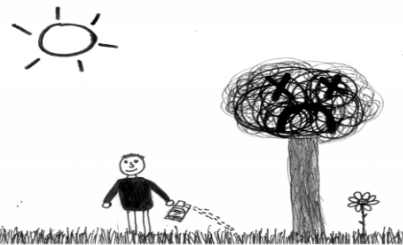
The NRC is here to help!

For questions or concerns, please call the **NRC** to be connected to our Wetlands Protection Administrator at: **781-431-1019 Ext. 2292**

You can also visit the Committee's website: www.wellesleyma.gov/421/wetlands-protection-committee



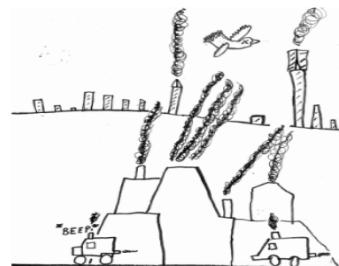
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Wellesley Wetlands Protection Committee

Living with Wetlands



What are Wetlands?

A wetland is a distinct ecosystem that is flooded by water, either permanently or seasonally. The primary factors that determine a wetland from other land forms is the characteristic vegetation and soil. Ponds, streams, rivers, marshes, vernal pools, red maple swamps, wet meadows and lands subject to flooding are all examples of wetlands. Plants such as Jewelweed, Skunk Cabbage and Red Maples are good indicators of wetlands.



The Importance of Wetlands

Flood Control:

Wetlands store floodwater and release it slowly down stream preventing storm damage and reduce flood levels.

Water Supply:

Wetlands help protect the quality and quantity of our public and private water supplies by filtering stormwater runoff. Wetland plants and soil absorb excess nutrients, and trap countless pollutants, removing them from our drinking water.

Wildlife: Many types of animals, including herons, ducks, hawks, songbirds, owls, beavers, fishers, raccoons, deer, foxes, turtles, salamanders, frogs, fish, and insects use Wellesley's wetlands and their vegetative buffer zones as a place to live, feed and breed.

Scenic Beauty:

Wetlands contribute greatly to Wellesley's natural beauty and biodiversity.

How Can You Help Protect Our Wetlands?

In addition to abiding by local and state wetland laws, here are some ways you can help protect our Town's wetlands:

Eliminate Using Chemical Fertilizers and Pesticides

Products like fertilizers, pesticides and deicers end up in our water supply due to runoff. Fertilizers cause algal blooms and nuisance plant growth, crowding our waterways. Herbicides, pesticides and deicers like salt, kill plants and animals indiscriminately.

Plant Native Vegetation

Native species are critical to a healthy wetland habitat. Consider restoring your yard with native species. For more information see "Wetlands Restoration Guidelines", downloadable at the WPC website: www.wellesleyma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6568/buffer-zone-restoration-guidelines-pdf

In addition, the N.E. Wildflower Society's Garden in the Woods has excellent resources about landscaping with native plant species. (www.NativePlantTrust.org)

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