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Model Shoreland Protection Bylaw

The Vermont General Assembly passed shoreland protection legislation that applies to activities within 250 feet of the mean water level of all lakes greater than 10 acres in size. Effective July 1, 2014, the Shoreland Protection Act (Chapter 49A of Title 10 §§ 1441 et seq.) established a new state regulation for guiding shoreland development. The intent of the Act is to prevent degradation of water quality in lakes, preserve habitat and natural stability of shorelines, and maintain the economic benefits of lakes and their shorelands by defining standards for the creation of buildings, driveways, and cleared areas in shorelands. The Act seeks to balance good shoreland management and shoreland development. To support towns in their efforts to establish appropriate shoreland protections VLCT developed a model shoreland protection bylaw for reference to municipalities that would like to adopt their own protection bylaws (below). This bylaw is considered "functionally equivalent" to the state standards.

According to the state of Vermont, "Under the Shoreland Protection Act municipalities can apply for delegation to administer permit construction of impervious surfaces and cleared areas within their town. Shoreland Permitting will review delegation requests and enter into a delegation agreement with municipalities whose bylaws or ordinances are found to be "functionally equivalent" to the state standards. At any time municipalities can adopt or improve their shoreland zoning in order to be eligible for delegation." - excerpt from the Department of Environmental Conservation's [The Vermont Shoreland Protection Act: A Handbook for Shoreland Development](#) [1]

The Shoreland Protection Act recognizes that many shoreland properties in Vermont are already developed or are small lots that cannot meet the new standards. Developed properties are "grandfathered" unless the owner proposes redevelopment. In the case of small lots, staff of the Agency of Natural Resources will work with homeowners so that standards are met to the extent possible.

The Vermont Department of Conservation maintains a page of relevant resources on shoreland permitting to help explain the permit and registration process. Additionally, they have a project worksheet for determining whether or not you need a permit [Shoreland Project Worksheet](#) [2]. If you have questions about the Shoreland Protection Act contact the Watershed Management Division at:

Watershed Management Division
Main Building - 2nd Floor
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
Main Telephone: [802-828-1535](tel:802-828-1535) [3]
Fax: [802-828-1544](tel:802-828-1544) [4]
[Email](mailto:anr.wsmd@vermont.gov) [5]

Website: <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/permit/shoreland> [6]

Documents:

 [Model Shoreland Protection Bylaw.docx](https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/documents/Resource/Model%20Shoreland%20Protection%20Bylaw.docx) [7]

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- Model

Links

[1] https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Shoreland/lp_ShorelandHandbook.pdf

[2]

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjE34v294TuAhVGrFkKHx70CjcQFjAAegQIBBAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdec.vermont.gov%2Fsites%2Fdec%2Ffiles%2Fwsm%2Flakes%2Fdocs%2FShoreland%2FShorelandProjectWorksheet_06072017.pdf&usg=AOvVaw38BaFKti0BLnpj67MYSf8F

[3] tel:802-828-1535

[4] tel:802-828-1544

[5] <mailto:anr.wsmd@vermont.gov>

[6] <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/permit/shoreland>

[7] <https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/documents/Resource/Model%20Shoreland%20Protection%20Bylaw.docx>