

Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Frequently Asked Questions and Permit Application Information

When and where are the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) Meetings?

- The location for each meeting is posted on the Wetlands Meeting Agenda. For most meetings, the Commission meets in person at the Community Room in the Andover Town Hall, and meetings can be attended virtually via Zoom. The meetings are at 7:00 PM on the first Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise posted)—please see [calendar](#) or the [meeting agenda](#) or contact the Wetlands Agent or Building and Land Use Department for information on how to participate.

Who can I contact for help or questions?

- The Wetlands Agent for the Town of Andover will assist you with any questions that you might have regarding the application process.
- The Wetlands Agent works part-time and may be reached by email (preferred) at wetlands@andoverct.org or by phone at 860-742-7305 x4221.

How do I know if there are wetlands on my property?

- The Town of Andover does not have an official map of wetlands and watercourses. The Building and Land Use Department uses the [Capital Region Council of Governments \(CRCOG\) Tax Parcel Viewer Maps](#) (you can also find a link on the Town of Andover Website). The “[CT Environmental Conditions Online Map Viewer](#)” is also a good resource to get started with. However, you should be aware that these maps are only a guide and not all wetlands have been identified or accurately depicted on them. Some are bigger on the map than they actually are, and some are smaller or not represented on the map at all.
- **You can also look in the building department files to see if:**
 - Wetlands are delineated (marked) on the original site plan for your property.
 - Any previous Wetlands Commission permit applications were filed and/or granted.
 - Wetlands are marked on a subdivision plan which includes or is near your property.
- A soil scientist may be needed to determine if there are wetlands on your property by examining the soil types that are present (Connecticut determines location of wetlands by soil types). Here is a [list of certified soil scientists](#) (a list can also be found on the town website under "regulations and other helpful information").

How far does my project have to be from a wetland or watercourse?

- The [Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations](#) provide detailed guidance on when a permit is required, and should be referred to when determining if a permit application should be filed. For example, work such as building a house, a wall, a driveway, a deck, placing a shed, digging a trench, placing a patio, removing brush with a controlled burn, etc. within wetlands or within the 100-foot or 200-foot “Upland Review Area” requires a permit.
- **Here are the simplified requirements:**
 - Any work in, on the shoreline of, or across any wetland or watercourse requires a permit.
 - Any work within 200 feet of the “Doris Chamberlain Nature Pond,” Andover Lake, Bishop's Swamp, Burnap Brook, Cheney Brook (also known as “Andover Lake Brook”), the Hop River, the Skungamaug River, and Staddle Brook requires a permit.
 - Any work within 100 feet of any other waterbody (ponds, streams, swamps, etc.) requires a permit.
 - Any work in or along the shore of Andover Lake requires an approval letter from the Andover Lake Management Association (ALMA) along with a Wetlands Commission permit.

Can I build a fence in wetlands?

- Any fence proposed within a wetland and some fences proposed in upland review areas require approval from the Andover Wetlands Commission or Wetlands Agent. Please contact the Wetlands Agent to determine if your fence project will need a permit.

What if I want to build a wall on my property?

- A wall within or on the shoreline of Andover Lake, or within wetlands or watercourses will require a permit application. A wall within the 100-foot or 200-foot Upland Review Area may require a permit application, depending on its potential impact to the nearby wetland or watercourse. If you are thinking of building a wall within these areas, please contact the Wetlands Agent to discuss the project.

Can I cut trees down in my wetland?

- Certain tree removal operations that occur within the 100-foot or 200-foot Upland Review Area or a wetland can create sedimentation and/or erosion problems and may require approval from the Wetlands Agent or Wetlands Commission. Since the regulations can be vague, please contact the Wetlands Agent to discuss the plan and determine if a permit is required. Clear-cutting in Upland Review Areas or in wetlands requires a permit application and review by the Andover Wetlands Commission.

What if I'm building something for a farm, or clearing timber for a forestry operation?

- A lot of agricultural activities are considered “exempt” and don't require a wetlands permit. However, the Wetlands Commission has the right to review the proposed activity to determine whether or not it's an exempt activity. Please contact the Wetlands Agent to discuss your proposed activity and to determine what the next steps are (if any steps are necessary). Here is a link to a brochure where you can find more information on [agricultural exemptions and the permitting process](#).

How does the permit application review process work?

- At the first regular meeting of the IWWC after submittal of your application, the Commission will formally receive your application. If your application was submitted with ample time for the Commission to review, they will discuss your application, including reviewing plans, asking clarifying questions, and possibly scheduling a site walk. The Commission legally cannot act on your application during the meeting that it is received. (Connecticut laws require a 14-day waiting period after receipt of the application to allow for proper public notice, giving citizens an opportunity to require a public hearing by delivering a petition with at least 25 signatures.)
- Depending on how complex your proposed project is, the Commission may act on the application (approve or deny it) at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission. For more complex projects, additional time may be required to review the application. In certain circumstances, a public hearing may also be required.

How long does it take to get a Permit from the Wetlands Commission?

- **The length of time for an application to be reviewed and deliberated can vary based on the following factors:**
 - The quality of your permit application—does it include all the information that the Commission or Agent needs to make an informed decision?
 - The complexity or size and scope of the work being proposed—for instance, an application to place a pre-built shed in an Upland Review Area will most likely take less time to review than an application to fill or relocate a wetland in order to build a house.
 - Whether the application needs to be reviewed by Andover's Inland Wetland & Watercourses Commission or by the Wetlands Agent.
- If your permit is approved by the Agent or Commission, Connecticut state statutes mandate that there is a 15-day appeal period where the public legally can appeal the approval of the permit. The public is notified by a posting on the town website and by a “legal notice” published in the local newspaper. It is recommended to wait until the 15-day appeals period has passed before you start any work related to your wetlands permit (you aren't required by law to wait, but you may be responsible for remediation costs if the permit is overturned by an appeal).

What are the deadlines for filing an application with the Wetlands Commission?

- The Andover Town Hall is closed on Fridays. To get your application on the agenda, you must submit your application to the Building Department by the close of the workday (3:00pm) WEDNESDAY of the week before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the IWWC. Please refer to the [calendar on the Andover town website](#) for exact meeting dates.
- Please allow the Commission and the Wetlands Agent ample time to review your application and supporting documents. It is strongly encouraged that all applications be submitted at least 5 business days prior to the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

What do I have to submit with an application that has to go before the Wetlands Commission?

- All permit applications require a completed application form, a site plan, a completed [CT DEEP STATEWIDE INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES ACTIVITY REPORTING FORM](#), and payment for the application fee. Some applications require more detailed information than other applications. An [Application Checklist](#) is available to help ensure that you provide all the documentation required for your proposed project.

What should I include on the site plan?

- Please include a map or site plan showing the existing conditions and the proposed project in relation to wetland/watercourses. Please indicate the scale that you are using. A hand-drawn map may be sufficient for small or simple projects.
 - **The following 10 details are required on your site plan:**
 1. Applicant's name.
 2. Date of original version of map and dates of any revisions to the map.
 3. A north arrow and the scale of the map.
 4. Abutting road with road name shown.
 5. Property lines (Please show property lines within 200 feet of the proposed work if it's a large property).
 6. Wetland and watercourse locations (including those off your property) within 100 feet (or 200 feet if the wetland is an "area of special concern") of your proposed activity. Please draw a line from the proposed project to the closest wetland or watercourse and indicate the distance in feet.
 7. Existing buildings, driveways, wells, septic systems, and other physical features.
 8. Proposed work in detail, including all areas of construction, grading and regrading, excavation and filling. Please include stockpiling and staging area locations if applicable. Please show the exact location of all areas that are to be disturbed.
 9. Roof and footing drain locations.
 10. Location of erosion and sedimentation controls and any other measures that are in place to protect the wetland/watercourse areas (for example, silt fences or hay bales).

How should I describe the project?

- Explain exactly what work you propose to do and how close it will be to a wetland or watercourse.
- Describe area of disturbance and volume and type of material to be filled or excavated. How big is the disturbance to the wetlands and/or the Upland Review Area?
- Does the area of activity drain toward the wetland?
- Are there alternatives that you considered but eliminated for specific reasons?
- Describe the construction methods. What kind of equipment will be used? When will the work be done?
- How will the wetlands and watercourses be protected against disturbance during and after construction?
- Do you have any knowledge of a previous wetlands application for this property? If yes, please explain.
- Please include any other available information that may assist the Commission in understanding your proposal.

What the guidelines for erosion and sedimentation controls?

- Proper installation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation controls can be an important part of your plan and may be required for approval of your application.
- Please explain your erosion control plan. If appropriate, please also include any alternative erosion and sedimentation controls that you considered, and explain why you chose the plan that you did. If necessary, indicate the alternatives on another site plan or drawing.
- **Erosion and sedimentation controls should:**
 1. Prevent or minimize pollution or other environmental damage.
 2. Maintain or enhance existing environmental quality.
 3. Restore, enhance and/or create productive wetland or watercourse resources.

What do I have to submit in order to obtain an Agent Approval (Permit) for work in the Upland Review Area?

- The application form and initial process for an Agent-issued permit for work in the 100 or 200-foot Upland Review Area is basically the same as a permit application to the full commission. The Wetlands Agent will review the application and determine if it can be approved or if it needs to go before the full Commission. If your permit is approved by the Agent, please note that there is a 15-day appeals period when any member of the public (this includes Wetlands Commission members) can appeal the issuance of the permit.

Do I Need to Attend the Commission Meetings?

- You and/or your representative should try to attend the first meeting so you can answer any questions the Commissioners may have on the day they officially "receive" your application. You should also try to attend the next meeting, where the commissioners may have follow-up questions and/or ask you to provide additional information.

When does my permit expire?

- Depending on the approval motion, permits are valid for 2-5 years. Please refer to the approval motion and your permit to determine the actual duration. Once started, work must be finished within the time period as written in the permit or approval motion. Please contact the Wetlands Agent with any questions about permit extensions or renewals.

Application Procedure:

To allow enough time for the Commission to conduct a review, please submit your application materials **at least one week before** the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The Town of Andover uses the “PermitLink” online permitting program for wetlands permit applications.

You should submit Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Permit application materials using the PermitLink program. If you can’t access PermitLink or don’t have a computer and/or scanner, you can submit applications and plans to either the Town Hall’s Building and Land Use Department, or you can email them to buildingadmin@andoverct.org, or wetlands@andoverct.org.

Please note that applications are not considered complete until the required application fee has been paid in full.

It’s strongly encouraged to discuss your proposed project with the Town of Andover’s Wetlands Agent prior to submitting an application. The Wetlands Agent can be reached by email at wetlands@andoverct.org.

How do I submit an application through PermitLink?

- To use PermitLink, you must first create a login account. Once your login account is created, you can use it for all wetlands and other land use and building permit applications you need to submit.
- If you need assistance or need access to a computer, there is one available in the Building Department/Land Use office at the Andover Town Hall. [If you unable to submit your application online, please click here for the form.](#)
- If you have documents or site plans that you can’t attach to the PermitLink application (for example, they may be too large for a conventional scanner), you can mail them, email them or drop them off at the Building Department in the Town Hall.
- Wetlands permit fees can vary depending on the application and type of work to be performed. The Wetlands Agent or Building Department Administrative Assistant will review your application and let you know which fees are applicable.
- No permit will be issued until payment and all documentation is received. Please write the address of the project on all submitted documentation, and on all checks submitted for the application fees.
- The town of Andover has enabled online payment of applications submitted through PermitLink. You may also mail or deliver payment (cash or check payable to *Town of Andover*) to the following address: Town of Andover, ATTN: Land Use Office, 17 School Rd, Andover CT 06232.