

Natural Resource Permits

A Guide for Environmental Permitting
Orange County Environmental Protection Division



Boat Docks (Chapter 15, Article IX)

If you live in unincorporated Orange County, Oakland, Ocoee or Windermere, all new docks require a permit from the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and a building permit from either the Orange County Building Safety Division or the building department of these municipalities. Orange County's Building Division will only accept plans that have been approved by EPD. Building Division fees are based on structure specifications. For information on these fees, call **407-836-5550**.

Repairs, additions, or other modifications of docks, including the addition of a floating dock or Jet Ski platform, also generally require a permit. To determine if repairs or modifications require authorization, contact EPD.

Lakeshore Restoration (Chapter 15, Article VII)

Naturally vegetated or restored shorelines protect water quality, prevent erosion, provide fish and wildlife habitat, and provide a pleasant place for relaxation and enjoyment.

Within Orange County, a lakeshore homeowner is entitled to a vegetation-free access corridor of 20% or 30 feet of total linear shoreline, whichever is greater, without a permit. If you want to remove nuisance vegetation outside of the access corridor or within an adjacent shoreline wetland, a Lakeshore Protection Permit (LSP) is required. This permit will allow you to remove nuisance and exotic vegetation; however, replanting of beneficial native species is required to meet 80% coverage of native aquatic vegetation. The LSP permit will allow you to maintain the shoreline and any adjacent shoreline wetlands free of nuisance and exotic vegetation as long as you maintain 80% areal coverage of native plants. Note that certain trees and endangered plants cannot be removed from the shoreline. Generally, boat docks are to be placed in the access corridor. An access corridor is not allowed within any adjacent shoreline wetlands.

Shoreline Alteration/ Dredge & Fill (SADF) (Chapter 15, Article VI)*

Structures that stabilize the shoreline, such as vertical seawalls and rip rap, require a Shoreline Alteration/Dredge and Fill Permit (SADF). Non-vertical methods, for example the use of rip rap combined with native aquatic plants, are preferred over vertical seawalls because they have less environmental impact. If a new vertical seawall is proposed along a shoreline where the adjoining parcels do not have one, the applicant must demonstrate that a seawall is the only method of stabilizing the shoreline. The installation of rip rap and native aquatic plantings are required in front of any new or repaired seawall. If you want to repair or replace an existing seawall, a permit is generally required. An SADF Permit is also required to remove muck or any other types of dredging of the bottom of lakes, canals, and all other types of waterbodies.

Boat Ramps (Chapter 15, Article XV)*

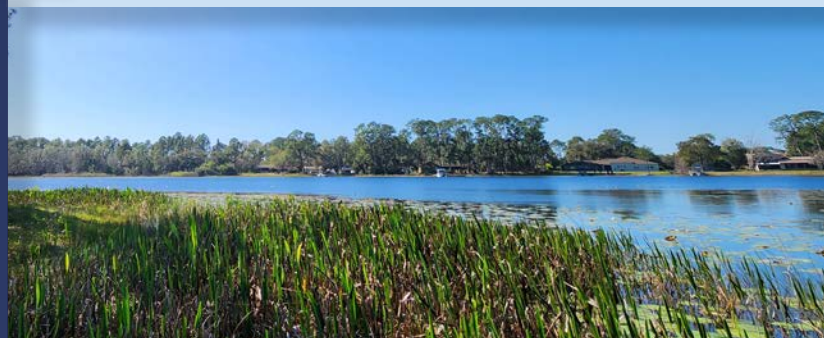
Boat ramps have very specific design criteria depending on the size, location, and who will be utilizing the boat ramp facility. For example, due to the anticipated higher number of users and potential greater effect to the waterbody, a public or commercial ramp is subject to more criteria than a private ramp.

Wetlands and Surface Waters (Chapter 15, Article X)

Parcels that contain wetlands and/or surface waters (e.g., lakes, ponds, rivers, creeks) typically require a Wetland Determination (WD) prior to development. The applicant is required to have an environmental professional flag the wetlands and surface waters to determine its boundaries. EPD staff will visit the site to verify the wetland was properly flagged. Once the boundaries are set, a wetland line survey is required. A WD is valid for five years. If the proposed activity includes impacts to wetlands, surface waters or required upland buffers, a Natural Resource Impact Permit (NRIP) is required. Mitigation may be required to offset impacts through such actions as onsite preservation, enhancement of remaining wetlands, or the purchase of offsite mitigation credits, etc.

Enforcement

EPD is responsible for enforcing all the County codes referenced in this guide. EPD staff works closely with property owners to bring their property into compliance, and often successfully resolves cases without formal enforcement. However, if the property cannot be brought into compliance, the case may be taken to the Orange County Special Magistrate. For a complete listing of Orange County codes, please visit www.municode.com.



*Both the SADF and Boat Ramp permit applications typically require approval by the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing. Because of the time required to review, schedule a public hearing, and send out notices, these permits generally take longer to issue.

You may need permits from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), or the applicable Water Management District prior to beginning your project.

Contact Information:

Florida Department of
Environmental Protection
Central District Office
407-897-4100

St. Johns River Water
Management District
407-659-4800

South Florida Water
Management District
407-858-6100

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission Northeast Regional District Office
352-732-1225