

Working in Waters and Wetlands During Flood Emergencies

What property owners need to know about emergency removal-fill permits

During floods, property owners may need to take action to address immediate threats to health, safety or property. The emergency removal-fill permit option offers a fast, free way to resolve hazardous situations while also preventing damage to natural resources.

Steps to take before starting work

1. **Gather Basic Information.** So work can begin as quickly as possible, be prepared to provide basic information about your property, the flood event, the area being impacted, and what you plan to do to alleviate the immediate threat. Document the hazard and the area where you'll be working with photos.
2. **Contact DSL.** During business hours, call 503-986-5200 if your property is west of the Cascades, or 541-388-6112 if east of the Cascades. If the emergency occurs outside business hours and immediate action is needed, call the Oregon Office of Emergency Management at 1-800-452-0311.
3. **Get Approval.** DSL works hard to quickly approve emergency permits. See below for more information about emergency permits. In extreme situations, staff may be able to provide verbal approval for work to proceed.

Flood Emergency Permits – Fast and Free

Under Oregon's removal-fill law, permits are required for most projects that remove or fill materials in wetlands and waterways.

In emergency situations such as floods, it's important for people to be able to quickly address an immediate threat. Emergency permits can be issued for removal-fill activity such as bank stabilization or flood protection measures. Emergency permits for erosion and flood repair are free.

If time allows, you may be asked to fill out a simple application form. DSL can issue a permit as soon as key information is provided. If a verbal approval is provided, you will still be asked to submit the emergency permit application as soon as you can.

When Emergency Work is Complete

After the emergency work is complete, DSL staff may visit the site and require modifications to the project or require mitigation to compensate for impacts to the wetland or waterway.

It's important to know that emergency permits approve only the work necessary to immediately address the hazard. If a long-term solution is needed, a removal-fill permit will likely be required.

Resources

Not sure if you need a permit? Contact DSL at 503-986-5200 (Salem) or 541-388-6112 (Bend) before starting work.

Emergency permit application: <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/WW/Pages/WWforms.aspx>

Removal-fill permit requirements and process: <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/WW/Pages/Permits.aspx>