

- (a) New or expansion of existing subsurface sewage disposal systems. 50 ft.
- (b) Verified repair of existing septic system. 25 ft.
- (c) Single-family residence on an individual lot; substantially improved single family residence; outbuilding with bathroom; and any additions to the foregoing structures; air-conditioning units and power generators. 50 ft.
- (d) Non- residential structures; two or more single family residences on one lot; two family residences on one or more lots; multi-family residences on one or more lots; and any additions to the foregoing structures; air-conditioning units and power generators. 75 ft.
- (e) Commercial structures, industrial use and any additions to the foregoing structures. 75 ft.
- (f) Outbuildings without a bathroom, decks, patios and walls with or without footings, dumpsters and trash compactors. 30 ft.
- (g) Tennis courts and swimming pools. 35 ft.
- (h) Parking lots and shoulder of driveway edge. 30 ft.
- (i) Fences, pool filtration units. 25 ft.
- (j) Limit of fill, cut, grading and other alteration. 20 ft.

Any associated landscaping within the 20' upland review setback must be approved by the Conservation Department to ensure the use of native plant species. A list of native wetland plants is available in the Conservation office or online at the web address provided in this pamphlet.

A 100 ft. upland review area may be imposed if the property the wetlands or watercourses are located on is in the Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone, has the presence of steep slopes 25% or greater, contains vernal pools or endangered species.

Please contact the Conservation Department should you wish to perform any activities on a property containing inland wetlands and/or watercourses. Permit applications are available online.

What is the Waterway Protection Line Ordinance?

The Waterway Protection Line Ordinance or WPLO is a town ordinance unique to Westport that is designed to protect the limits of a waterway as defined as any river, stream, brook, watercourse or tributary, both fluvial and tidal, including any contiguous backwater, pond or other body of water or any floodplain, swamp, marsh, bog or other wetlands.

Basically, any waterway or wetland within the Town boundary falls under WPLO jurisdiction with the exception of those properties that are directly influenced by the tidal waters of Long Island Sound. Please contact the Conservation office to determine if your property falls under WPLO jurisdiction and needs permitting.

Contact Information:

Conservation Department,
 Westport Town Hall, Room 205
 110 Myrtle Avenue
 Westport, CT 06880
 203-341-1170
www.westportct.gov/conservation

TOWN OF WESTPORT



INLAND WETLANDS AND
 WATERCOURSES
 REGULATIONS
 &
 WATERWAY PROTECTION
 LINE ORDINANCE
 GUIDE

JANUARY 2016

What are inland wetlands?

The State of Connecticut defines a wetland as land, including submerged land, not regulated as tidal wetlands, consisting of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and floodplain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey for the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

By this definition, a wetland is delineated by soil type and not necessarily by the presence of standing water. You may have wetland soils on your property and may not even be aware of it. Wetlands also include any standing or flowing body of water such as ponds, streams and rivers.

How can I find out if I have wetlands on my property?

The Conservation Department has soil maps of the Town of Westport on file in Room 205 of the Town Hall that show wetland and watercourse boundaries, you may visit the Conservation Department to view these maps during regular business hours, Monday – Friday, 8:30 - 4:30 pm. Staff will assist you in determining if your property contains wetlands.

The Town of Westport is comprised of over 6,300 acres of inland wetlands, covering one-third of the town's total area. These wetlands include; three rivers, ten major streams and numerous bodies of water that are vital to the health and natural beauty of the town.

Basic Wetland Functions

Surface Water Storage

This function helps prevent flooding by temporarily storing water, allowing it to soak into the ground or evaporate. This temporary storage can help reduce peak water flows after a storm by slowing the movement of water into tributary streams, which allows potential floodwaters to reach mainstream rivers over a longer period of time. Water quality is also improved by removing nutrients, pesticides and bacteria from surface waters as they are absorbed or broken down by plants, animals and chemical processes within the wetland.

Subsurface Water Storage

Wetlands are reservoirs for rainwater and runoff. As this water is released into the ground, it recharges water tables and aquifers and extends the period of stream flows in many parts of the United States.

Nutrients Cycling

Wetlands enhance the decomposition of organic matter, incorporating nutrients back into the food chain.

Retention of Particles

By filtering out sediment and particles suspended in runoff water, wetlands help prevent ponds, lakes, reservoirs and other resources from being affected by downstream sediment loading. This improves water quality and extends the life of water bodies by reducing sedimentation rates.

Maintenance of Plant and Animal Communities

Both coastal and inland wetlands provide breeding, nesting and feeding habitat for millions of waterfowl, birds, fish and other wildlife. Wetlands in the United States support about 5,000 plant species, 190 species of amphibians and a third of all native bird species. Coastal wetlands are an integral part of the life cycle for many marine organisms; they are the nursery and spawning grounds for 60-90 percent of U.S. commercial fish catches.

Values to Society

There are a number of other values society receives from wetlands. Some of these values are providing sites for fishing, photography, outdoor classrooms or environmental education and the enjoyment of open spaces. The ecological diversity and high productivity of wetlands make them one of the most scenic features on any landscape.

Do I need a permit to perform work on my property if it contains wetlands?

If your property contains inland wetlands or watercourses or is adjacent to property that does, the Conservation Department must review the activity for proper permitting. Those activities that fall outside of the upland review area setbacks (a/k/a setbacks) are eligible for an administrative approval at the staff level. Those activities that fall within the upland review area or within the wetland itself will be reviewed by the Conservation Commission at a public hearing. The Commission meets once a month. Activities and associated upland review area include: