

Docks and structures along the shore

Is a DNR permit required to install a dock or swimming platform in a lake?

A DNR public waters work permit is not required to construct, reconstruct or install docks, floating or temporary structures, watercraft lifts and mooring facilities if the following conditions are satisfied:

- Will not be an obstruction to navigation or create safety hazard.
- Will not be detrimental to significant fish and wildlife habitat.
- Site is not a posted fish spawning area.
- Does not have a roof, walls or sewage facilities and is not used or intended to be used for human habitation or as a boat storage structure.
- Allows for the free flow of water beneath it.
- Is consistent with or allowed under local government zoning authority controls.
- Other than a seasonal watercraft lift or canopy, is not more than 8 feet in width, and is not combined with other similar structures so as to create a larger structure.
- Docks placed on rock filled cribs are located only on waters where the bed is incapable of accepting pilings.

Note: Temporary structures which do not extend from shore, such as: swim rafts, slalom courses, ski jumps or buoys of any kind, may not be placed in the waters of the state between sunset and sunrise without a permit from the county sheriff. Those structures not left in the water overnight are still required to be placed so that they do not create a hazard on the water body or obstruct navigation. Contact the water patrol unit of your county sheriff's department for permit information. Call the DNR Boat and Water Safety Section at 651-259-5400 for additional information.

Sometimes disputes regarding the installation of docks and other structures in front of adjacent properties occur. Such disputes are best settled by first discussing your concerns with your neighbor. If your neighbor is uncooperative, you may have to contact an attorney about the legalities of your neighbor's actions.

See the information sheet titled [Docks and Access in Public Waters](#) under [DNR Waters Publications](#).