

A Guide to Credit Valley Conservation Agricultural Development Permitting

Introduction

Agriculture plays an important role in sustaining rural communities and supporting a healthy, strong economy. It provides important capital investment and safe local food. It's an integral part of our landscape and economic well-being.

Agriculture is practiced on more than 72,000 acres in the Credit River Watershed. Much of this land is within the upper part of the watershed that contains important headwater areas. Many farms have vital natural features like wetlands and watercourses that benefit from the protection and stewardship efforts of farmers and rural landowners to keep them healthy and prosperous.

A positive, collaborative relationship with the farming community is critical to effective watershed management. This guide provides a general overview of Credit Valley Conservation's (CVC's) regulations and identifies farming activities that may require consultation and/or regulatory approvals. This guide is part of CVC's ongoing efforts to support farming and rural communities throughout the watershed.



What is a CVC permit?

Conservation Authorities regulate development activities and building construction in or near certain natural features and lands containing natural hazards – pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act. Regulated Areas include watercourses, rivers and stream valleys, floodplains, areas prone to stream erosion, wetlands, and other hazardous lands (e.g., unstable soils and karst topography).

CVC regulates activities in these areas to help protect life and property from flooding and erosion hazards. Our regulation helps safeguard health across the watershed by preventing pollution and other negative effects on ecologically sensitive areas such as significant natural features, wetlands, areas along shorelines and in valleys, and watercourses that fall within regulated areas.

Development associated with agricultural activities that occur within a Regulated Area may require our permission before any work can begin. Permission is typically given in the form of a CVC permit. Permission may also be provided through a clearance letter where the work to be done is minor (e.g., replacing siding on a barn) and poses little or no risk to public health and safety.

What needs a CVC permit?

Below is a brief list of common agricultural development activities that occur within areas regulated by CVC.

Agricultural development activities in a Regulated Area that DO NOT require a CVC permit include, but are not limited, to:

- ✗ Agricultural uses such as cropping, pasturing, tilling, fence installation and repair, fence row clearing, weeding, livestock management.
- ✗ Maintenance and upkeep of existing buildings and structures such as roof/window replacement, siding.
- ✗ Activities considered minor in nature such as gardening, minor landscaping, nursery operations, timber harvesting and managing a woodlot that does not result in measurable changes to a grade.

- ✗ Shrub and tree planting or removal of dead, diseased or hazard trees.
- ✗ Well installations.

Agricultural activities that MAY require a CVC permit when they occur within or open to a CVC Regulated Area include, but are not limited, to:

- ✓ Construction of new buildings and structures such as houses, barns and sheds – including additions or expansion of buildings and structures.
- ✓ Replacement, reconstruction or relocation of an existing building or structure.
- ✓ Realigning, channeling or straightening a watercourse channel.
- ✓ Altering a watercourse (e.g. enclosing, trenching, piping or dredging).
- ✓ Placement of fill, excavation or grade changes.
- ✓ New culvert and bridge installation or replacement.
- ✓ Installation of slope or stream bank erosion protection (e.g., rip rap, gabion baskets, slope/bank grading, stone/log structures etc.) or berming in or near a watercourse.
- ✓ Installation and/or repair of field tile drainage including outlets to a wetland or watercourse.*
- ✓ Installation of utilities, including utility connections (e.g., telephone, cable, gas lines etc).

** Field tile drainage installed with enough setback from a wetland or watercourse within a CVC Regulated Area with no new outlet may not require a permit.*

If you are unsure whether the development activity or project you're undertaking requires CVC approval or if you know your property is regulated, connect with us to discuss your plans in greater detail.

Why get approval from CVC?

CVC's permitting process helps ensure you are making a safe and sound investment. It ensures your activities do not negatively impact your neighbours – and conversely, that your neighbour's activities don't impact you. This process helps reduce risk to life and property associated with flooding, erosion and other natural hazards that could impact your investment. It also minimizes impacts to important natural features on your property such as watercourses and wetlands.

CVC's permitting process provides you access to knowledgeable, qualified professionals who will assist you with an efficient approval. We will also provide suggested improvements to your plans if necessary.

When reviewing your plans, we will be checking that your proposed development meets the following objectives:

- It does not result in unacceptable risks associated with hazards from flooding and erosion, or unstable soils, in an effort to prevent potential loss of life and to minimize property damage;
- It does not increase or aggravate flood and erosion risks to landowners living upstream and downstream from you.
- It sufficiently protects the hydrologic functions of wetlands and watercourses.



How do I get a permit?

We recommend you contact us to discuss your proposal before submitting a permit application.

Through our pre-consultation process, we will review your proposal and determine if the property and activity are regulated, and advise if the development requires CVC approval.

If a CVC permit is required, we will identify what information you need with your permit application (including the fee) to deem it complete. We also provide you with a processing timeline so you are best able to plan for starting your project.

If needed, we can assist in providing contacts for other environmental approvals that may be required, those from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.



How do I view CVC's Regulatory Mapping and contact CVC?

To view on-line mapping of our regulated areas, as well as find a copy of our permit application form, fee schedules and general overview of the permitting process, visit:

cvc.ca/permits

Discuss your project, or ask questions in person by visiting our 'Planning Counter' at CVC's Head Office at:

1255 Old Derry Road, Mississauga ON L5N 6R4

You may also contact CVC Planning and Development Services to discuss your potential project or questions at:

905 -670-1615 or 1-800-668-5557

planning@cvc.ca



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