



**ADMINISTRATIVE CODE INTERPRETATION
RELATED TO PERMEABLE HARD SURFACES AND ARTIFICIAL TURF**

1. Authority

The Department of Planning and Community Development has established procedural policies and guidelines authorized under Lake Stevens Municipal Code (LSMC) 14.04.120(a), which allows city departments to administratively adopt guidelines, standards, reference materials, forms or other documents that aid the public, applicant, staff or decision-maker in interpreting the LSMC. LSMC 14.16C.035 outlines the process for administrative interpretations to clarify the provisions of this title. This code interpretation is initiated per the Director's initiative, pursuant to LSMC 14.16C.035(c). Code interpretations are intended to:

- (1) Clarify ambiguous provisions of the code applied to a specific project;
- (2) Determine nonconforming rights;
- (3) Determine whether a use is allowed in a particular zone; and
- (4) Interpret the meaning of terms.

2. Intent

This policy is to provide clarification to the use of permeable hard surfaces and artificial turf as it pertains to maximum impervious areas for residential lots per the density and dimensional standards outlined in LSMC Table 14.48-I.

3. Process/Review Criteria

The LSMC Table 14.48-I outlines the maximum impervious surface area allowed for each residential zoning district. Residential lots constructed prior to the adoption of Ordinance 1080 (*effective April 1, 2020*) that may not have adequate stormwater facilities to mitigate the impacts of an increase in impervious surface are allowed a maximum impervious area of forty percent (40%) for single-family zones (R4, R6, and WR) and sixty-five percent (65%) for R8-12.

Through this policy, the City of Lake Stevens (City) calculates permeable hard surfaces as fifty percent (50%) impervious when evaluating the use of permeable hard surfaces towards the maximum impervious areas allowed per LSMC Table 14.48-I. Per LSMC 11.06.030, the City has adopted the 2012 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (SWMMWW), as amended in 2014, which defines permeable hard surfaces as fifty percent (50%) impervious when evaluating flow control. Installation and maintenance of permeable hard surfaces must comply with the SWMMWW to be calculated and applied by the City at the fifty percent (50%) impervious rate.

Artificial turf will be considered one hundred percent (100%) permeable if it is not installed in a way that prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil mantle (e.g., impervious underdrain system).

4. Implementation

Homeowners have the option to submit plans for formal staff review which would be processed and charged fees under *Miscellaneous Engineering Review*, per the City's current fee schedule. Formal staff review is strongly recommended when installing permeable hard surfaces, artificial turf, and/or other impervious surfaces on a property. This may mitigate potential code violation(s) related to impervious surfaces.

5. References

- [V-5.3.1 Best Management Practices for On-Site Stormwater Management](#)
- [LSMC Table 14.48-I](#)
- [Ordinance 1080](#) (effective April 1, 2020)

6. Interpretation

The City has determined that permeable hard surfaces may be considered as fifty percent (50%) impervious if installed according to the SWMMWW and LSMC Table 14.48-I.

The City has determined that artificial turf may be considered one hundred percent (100%) permeable if installed in a way that does not prevent or retard the entry of water into the soil mantle.



December 1, 2021

Russell Wright
Community Development Director

Date of Administrative Policy Determination

This code interpretation is a Type I Review and is issued pursuant to LSMC 14.16C.035 and may be appealed to the Hearing Examiner pursuant to LSMC 14.16A.210(b)(1). Appeals must be filed within 14 days after the date of this interpretation and must be filed with a written description of the specific aspect being appealed, any supporting evidence and filing fee pursuant to LSMC 14.16B.115.