



Dock Requirements



It's that time of year again where you and your families want to get back out on the lake and have some fun! Some basic information about dock repairs, improvements or new dock installations can be found below.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do I need a permit to build, repair or replace a dock?

A: Yes.

- Decking: Replacing decking or planks does not require a building permit R104.11 but does require a Land Use Permit (Shoreline Exemption). Please consult the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) for more info.
- Structural Repairs or Alterations: Any structural work, such as replacing or modifying posts or support beams, requires a Building Permit and a Land Use Permit (Shoreline Exemption). Pile driving requires a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) from Washington Fish & Wildlife and may require State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review.
- New Docks: New docks require a Building Permit, Land Use Permit (Shoreline Exemption or Shoreline Substantial Development depending on valuation), State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and an HPA.

Q: When can dock work occur?

A: Within the State Fish Window

The Fish Window for all in-water work for 2025 is July 15th through September 15th. It is important to get permits well ahead of time so you can complete all your work before the end of this window.

Q: Do setbacks apply to new docks?

A: Setbacks apply per the city's Shoreline Master Program

The Shoreline Master Program requires that your dock be placed no closer than 10 feet from the side property line. See Chapter 4.C.3.c.5.

Q: What can my dock be made of?

A: See the governing information below

- Any part of a dock, pier or float that contacts the water shall not be treated or coated with toxic materials. Only untreated wood, precast concrete, plastic, steel, or treated wood that meets or exceeds the standards outlined in the latest edition of the Western Wood Preservers Institute Best Management Practices for the Use of Treated Wood in the Aquatic and Sensitive Areas shall be used.
- Light transparent material is important to fish health. All decking within the first 30 feet from the shoreline is generally required to be at least 40% transparent, with some exceptions. See Chapter 4.C.3.c.24.a. Fiberglass or plastic grating is often used to meet this requirement.

For more information, please consult the [Lake Stevens Shoreline Master Program \(SMP\) Chapter 4.C.3, SMP User Guide](#) (overview of shoreline permits) or contact a planner at 425-622-9400.

Resources Available:

[Permit Center Lake Stevens](#)
[Shoreline Exemption](#)
[SEPA Checklist](#)

[Residential Building Permit Application](#)
[Shoreline Master Program \(SMP\)](#)
[HPA Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)