

Wright County Erosion Control | What You Need to Know

By Sean Riley | Zoning Administrator, Wright County Planning and Zoning

It seems like it's human nature to want to primp, groom and arrange our surroundings, whether it be a small garden project, a paver patio, or a large landscape retaining wall. In Wright County, many of these types of projects require that a permit be obtained from the local zoning authority, especially if you're on or near a lake.

If you're doing a project in lakeshore property that will move or disturb over 10 yards of earth (approximately 1 dump truck full), a permit is required. If it's something larger, over 50 yards of earth, you may need a Conditional Use Permit. You'll need a landscaping plan and a detailed description of the project to apply for a permit. Projects that are directly along the shore and on bluffs or steep slopes have DNR restrictions and the local planning and zoning office should be contacted before work in these areas. If work is being done below lake level or in the lake the DNR must be contacted first.

While doing the project, it's important to remember to protect the lake (and surrounding properties) from erosion and sedimentation. You can do this with a variety of methods, including properly installed silt fence, erosion control blankets, straw, mulch, sod or even seed. Keeping piles of dirt off of steep slopes and out of drainage ways can also help alleviate erosion problems.

If you are doing a project smaller than the 10 cubic yard permit requirement, or whenever you move any soil on your lakeshore property, you should protect the lake by using erosion control methods like those listed above. As with the permit requirements, you should have an erosion control method in place before you start your project. The erosion control method should stay in place and be in good working order until the area is re-vegetated or protected. Protect your lake regardless of the size of your project!

Do you have issues with erosion on your shoreline? A very popular method for reducing shoreline erosion is to do a natural shoreline restoration. Not only does this help with erosion, it is easy to maintain, provides critical habitat for wildlife, keeps geese away, and is beautiful. The DNR has excellent information on shoreline restoration <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakescaping/index.html> to help get you started.



Examples of natural shoreline restoration on Cedar Lake (Annandale) in Wright County.

Whatever the project is, it never hurts to call for advice and to know what the requirements are.