



Development in the Floodway – Regulatory Requirements

The regulatory floodway is that portion of stream channel and adjacent floodplain required for the passage or conveyance of a 100-year flood discharge. This is the area of significant depths and velocities and due consideration should be given to effects of fill, loss of cross sectional flow area, and resulting increased water surface elevations.

All developments in special flood hazard areas (not just construction of buildings) require local permits. A grading permit, issued by the Development Services Division of Metro Water Services, is required for all land disturbing activities over 10,000 sq. ft., such as filling or excavating soil, the installation of pipes or digging ditches, and alterations to drainage channels. A grading permit is also required for any project proposing earthmoving activities within the 100-year floodplain. Building permits, issued by Codes Administration, are required for all improvements or additions to existing structures as well as for any new structures. Applications for grading and building permits must be made prior to the start of construction. Additional information is available at the following link: <http://www.nashville.gov/Government/Development-Services.aspx>

No new structures shall be constructed within the floodway, except for the following: a) grade level surface parking areas, paths, and hiking trails, b) temporary structures not used for human dwellings, c) water-related features such as bridges, wharfs, docks, and boat ramps, d) public infrastructure installed by or for the benefit of Metro government, e) rebuilding of existing residential structures that are substantially damaged (within the same building footprint and elevated in accordance with requirements of the Metro Stormwater Management Manual, Volume 1- Regulations (SWMM), f) athletic fields used for recreational purposes, including associated facilities, and g) modifications or enlargements to buildings in active commercial or industrial use (as of 7/1/12) with approval of the Metro Stormwater Management Committee (SWMC).

Encroachments, including fill, excavation, clearing, new construction, and other developments, are prohibited unless certification (with supporting technical data) by a registered engineer is provided demonstrating that encroachments shall not result in any increase in flood levels during occurrence of the base flood discharge and a variance is granted through the Metro SWMC.

All residential structures built in the floodplain must be constructed with the lowest finished floor elevation located four feet above the 100-year base flood elevation (BFE). Non-residential structures must be elevated one foot above the BFE. All electrical switches, outlets, equipment, HVAC units, ductwork, plumbing, and other utility connections must be located a minimum of one foot above the BFE, including in garages. Any fill placed in the floodplain must be offset with an equal volume of cut removed from the floodplain.

New development and significant redevelopment sites and sites needing a grading permit are required to preserve water quality buffers along Metro's community waters, which include streams, rivers, springs, lakes, ponds, and wetlands. The floodway is a component of Zone 1 of Metro's water quality buffer. Zone 1 is considered a "no-disturb" area where only necessary disturbances are permitted. In addition, alterations to community waters are prohibited without a variance from the SWMC.

More detailed information can be found in the Metro Stormwater Management Manual, Volume 1 – Regulations at:

<http://www.nashville.gov/Water-Services/Developers/Stormwater-Review/Stormwater-Management-Manual/Regulations.aspx>.

For any questions regarding development in the floodway, contact Metro Water Services – Development Services at (615) 862-7225.

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