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Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 3:53 PM

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Cc: Keyes, Jennifer (MNRF) <jennifer.keyes@ontario.ca>

Subject: Update: Regulation of Development for the Protection of People and Property from Natural Hazards in Ontario – Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Extension of Minister's Fee Direction

This message is being sent on behalf of Jennifer Keyes, Director, Resources Planning and Development Policy Branch, MNRF

Good afternoon:

I am writing to inform you of recent updates under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (the act) regarding the regulation of development for the protection of people and property from natural hazards in Ontario. Amendments to the act that were made in recent years to update the conservation authorities permitting framework and associated regulations will come into effect on April 1, 2024. These changes will clarify and streamline regulatory requirements to focus on natural hazards and public safety and provide greater transparency in the permitting process.

Updated rules for the protection of people and property from natural hazards

Effective April 1, 2024, updated permitting related provisions of the act will come into effect, supported by a new Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits, which set out prohibited activities and areas where a conservation authority permit is required, exemptions for permits for certain low-risk activities, the process for applying for a conservation authority permit, and service requirements for conservation authorities in reviewing permit applications. The new rules will apply to all conservation authorities and replace the existing 36 conservation authority-specific regulations.

Key changes include:

- Updating some definitions and areas where development activities are prohibited, while maintaining important provincial standards.
- Requirements for mapping of regulated areas to be made available online and for public notification to be given of any changes.
- Exemptions from the requirement for a conservation authority permit for some low-risk activities, subject to certain conditions, such as sheds, removable docks, garage rebuilds, fencing, and agricultural drainage.
- Limiting the conditions that can be included on a permit to matters related to natural hazards and public safety and general permit administration.
- Service standards for permit issuance including pre-consultation and confirmation of complete applications within 21-days and requiring

annual reporting on permitting statistics including reporting on the level of conservation authority compliance with new regulatory requirements.

- Enabling applicants to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) if a permit decision is not made within 90-days and appeals of permitting fees charged by conservation authorities to the OLT.
- Enabling Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry's tools regarding the review of permit decisions and the issuance of permits.
- Updated enforcement powers and offence provisions under the act, including stop work orders and increased penalties.

A decision notice is now available at the Environmental Registry of Ontario, posting #019-2927: [Proposed updates to the regulation of development for the protection of people and property from natural hazards in Ontario](#).

Minister's Fee Direction

I would also like to notify you that the Minister has extended his Direction (through the issuance of a new Direction) to conservation authorities to not change any fees charged as part of their programs and services associated with planning, development, and permitting. This extended direction is in effect as of January 1, 2024, until December 31, 2024.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry at ca.office@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Keyes
Director, Resources Planning and Development Policy Branch
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
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