



Snohomish County
Planning and Development
Services

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ONLINE INFORMATION
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This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Assistance Bulletin

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Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

Q: Do I need a permit to build a dock?

A: Yes. A building permit application, plot plan, and construction plans must be submitted in accordance with building permit procedures. There are a few exceptions to the permit requirement, such as swimming floats for example, so check with counter personnel if you have questions.

Q: What are the building permit submittal requirements?

A: A dock or boathouse building permit submittal must include:

- One copy of a site/plot plan (an accurate and detailed map of your property which shows the location of existing buildings and the proposed work). It must contain (on a minimum 8 ½"x11" sheet of paper) the name of the property owner, north arrow, property lines, easements, dimensions, and the location of the proposed dock. A scale of the map is required.
- One completed building permit application form.
- One copy of construction drawings. Construction drawings must be drawn to a scale of ¼-inch = 1 foot (or larger) and contain a framing plan and a cross section.
- One copy of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist.
- An additional site plan must be provided showing all existing docks, clearly depicting their length, within 300 feet on either side of the subject parcel.

Q: When do I need a "Shoreline Substantial Development Permit?"

A: You must apply for a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (in addition to the building permit) if you are proposing to construct a private noncommercial dock or construct an addition to a dock and the total value of the dock exceeds the following value:

- \$10,000 fair market value as determined by the county on a freshwater lake governed by the Snohomish County Shoreline Management Program; or
- \$2,500.00 fair market value for a private dock in a saltwater environment.

Q: When do I need a "Flood Hazard Zone Permit?"

A: Check with counter personnel. Some lakes will require a flood hazard zone permit.

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

Q: Do I need a building permit if I'm only building an anchored swimming float or raft?

A: Not usually. Swimming floats/rafts and floating docks that are secured in place by an anchoring device do not require a building permit. You should, however, check with the Department of Wildlife for Hydraulics Permit (HPA) requirements. If the float or floating dock exceeds the valuation limits listed above, or materially interferes with the normal public use of the water or shoreline, a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit will be required.

Q: What do I need to know about zoning requirements for my dock or boathouse?

A: The Snohomish County Code, Section 30.22.130(3), states the following information about private, non-commercial docks and boathouses:

- The height of any covered over-water structure shall not exceed 12 feet, as measured from the line of ordinary high water.
 - The total roof area of covered, over-water structures shall not exceed 1,000 square feet.
 - The entirety of such structures shall have a width no greater than 50 percent of the width of the lot at the natural shoreline upon which it is located.
 - No over-water structure shall extend beyond the mean low-water mark a distance greater than the average length of all pre-existing over-water structures along the same shoreline and within 300 feet of the parcel on which proposed. Where no such pre-existing structures exist within 300 feet, the pier length shall not exceed 50 feet.
 - Structures permitted hereunder shall not be used as a dwelling, nor shall any boat moored at any wharf be used as a dwelling while so moored.
 - Covered structures are subject to a minimum setback of three feet from any side lot line or extension thereof. No side yard setback shall be required for uncovered structures. No rear yard setback shall be required for any structure permitted hereunder.
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