



# HOW CAN YOU HELP PROTECT WATER QUALITY?

## Voluntary Best Management Practices For Development around Waterbodies

Best Management Practice	Rationale
<p><b>Maintain the natural shoreline or riparian habitat.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve a minimum 75 foot wide buffer of continuous, undisturbed native vegetation along at least 50% of the parcel's shoreline or stream bank.</li> <li>• Along remaining 50% of shoreline, limit vegetation removal to what is necessary to accommodate paths, docks, or other limited development.</li> </ul>	<p>Protects water quality by reducing nutrient loading in lakes and minimizing temperature changes to stream environments.</p> <p>Provides flood control and reduces erosion and sedimentation.</p> <p>Protects fish and wildlife habitat by providing cover, nest sites and spawning areas.</p>
<p><b>Minimize impervious surfaces on shoreline lots.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit to maximum of 25% of lot area.</li> <li>• Minimize as much as possible within 75 feet of the water's edge.</li> </ul>	<p>Impervious surfaces such as pavement, roof tops, and compacted soil allow runoff to enter waterbodies more readily.</p> <p>Runoff in residential or commercial areas may contain phosphorus and other nutrients that lead to oxygen deficits and algal blooms.</p>
<p><b>Avoid adding sand beaches or adding fill material to lakeshore, stream banks or wetland areas.</b></p>	<p>Sand or fill reduces water clarity, is harmful to aquatic life and may contain phosphorus that enriches waterbodies.</p>
<p><b>Adhere to the state of Alaska's 100 foot waterbody separation for septic systems and outhouses, and keep septic systems in good working order.</b></p>	<p>Bacterial contamination from poorly maintained or leaking septic systems or outhouses is a human health concern.</p> <p>Nutrients from poorly functioning septic systems or outhouses are waterbody pollutants.</p>
<p><b>Use landscaping practices that will reduce degradation of waterbodies, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test soils to see if fertilizers are needed and use sparingly.</li> <li>• Design a smaller lawn to reduce fertilizer use.</li> <li>• Use native species that grow well without fertilizer.</li> <li>• Avoid fertilizer use completely within 50 feet of the water's edge.</li> </ul>	<p>Lawns are often over-fertilized, which leads to harmful levels of nutrients in the water.</p> <p>Lawns are not as effective as natural vegetation for pollution filtration.</p> <p>Lawns do not provide protective cover for fish and wildlife populations that are part of the waterbody system.</p>
<p><b>Maintain at least a 75' distance from the water's edge for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional permanent or accessory buildings.</li> <li>• Driveways, roads and other impervious surfaces.</li> <li>• Livestock or dog quarters or yards.</li> <li>• Manure or compost piles.</li> <li>• Long-term vehicle or equipment storage.</li> </ul> <p>Exceptions may include boathouses, floatplane hangers, marinas, piers and docks that need to be closer than 75 feet to serve their purposes.</p>	<p>Protects human health and water quality by reducing contamination from animal waste, compost, fuels, sediment and other substances that pollute waterbodies.</p>

Mat-Su Borough Ordinance 05-023 established voluntary measures that property owners can use to protect the quality of our lakes, streams and wetlands. For more information, contact the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Department of Planning and Land Use at 861-8556.