

PERMITTING OPTIONS FOR FLOOD-DAMAGED BRIDGES AND OTHER WATER OBSTRUCTIONS AND ENCROACHMENTS

Introduction

There are several authorizations available to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), other state agencies, municipalities, utilities, and private citizens that allow bridges and other water obstructions and encroachments that have been damaged or lost due to flooding to be repaired or replaced. A description of these authorizations is listed below. This fact sheet is a summary and does not modify the eligibility requirements of the applicable authorizations.

Activities that Do Not Require a Permit or Pre-approval from DEP

Removal of flood debris such as trees, logs, brush, or similar material from the stream channel where the work is accomplished from the bank; and removal of gravel and flood debris from 50 feet upstream and downstream of a bridge, culvert, or other structure where work can be accomplished from the bank can be conducted in most cases without authorization or notification. All debris removed should be disposed of in a safe, upland area and not in any wetlands.

Activities that Do Not Require a Permit but DO Require Notification to DEP

These activities include removal of bridges or culverts that have collapsed either in their entirety or a portion thereof; the existence of an unusual circumstance threatening the structural integrity of the bridge or culvert; the bridge or culvert needs to be repaired or removed. The owner of the structure needs to immediately inform DEP's regional Waterways and Wetlands Program to inform them that work is being done.

Existing Permits

If a structure has an existing permit where maintenance is addressed in the permit, repairs — but not replacements — may be conducted under the terms of the existing permit. Prior notification to, and verbal or written approval from, DEP is required.

Emergency Permits

DEP can issue an emergency permit or other permit authorization for the repair or replacement of damaged culverts, bridges or other stream crossings, or streambank stabilization or other stream work where there is an imminent threat to public health and safety or the environment that requires immediate remedial action. Emergency permits generally expire after 60 days, but DEP may extend the coverage period to an additional 60 days. Emergency permits may require an on-site inspection by DEP personnel prior to issuance of the emergency permit. Under certain circumstances, emergency permits can be authorized without this inspection, provided DEP is contacted and the necessary information is provided. If any of the above scenarios do not fit the specific circumstance, contact DEP to discuss other permitting options.

DEP Contact Information

Contact the nearest DEP office to obtain their authorization, to confirm if an on-site inspection is necessary and to determine if another process is more appropriate to coordinate the authorizations:

Northwest Region: Meadville	814-332-6945	Southwest Region: Pittsburgh	412-442-4000
North-central Region: Williamsport	570-327-3636	South-central Region: Harrisburg	717-705-4700
Northeast Region: Wilkes-Barre	570-826-2511	Southeast Region: Norristown	484-250-5900

For more information, visit www.dep.state.pa.us, keyword: Flood Recovery.