



Minor Maintenance Activity in Wetland Resource Areas Policy

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

PHONE: 978-264-1722

TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH, MA

Intent and Purpose

To outline the policy the Conservation Commission has agreed upon regarding minor maintenance activities in wetland resource areas.

Definitions

Home owners and property managers should be aware that the Town Wetland By-Law serves to protect Wetlands by restricting the use of wetlands and land located within 100 feet of Wetlands. The 100 ft. area beyond the edge of Wetlands is referred to as the Adjacent Land Resource Area, or more commonly, the “**Buffer Zone**”.

The definition of **minor maintenance** is intended to include vegetative management activity that does not alter the existing character of the Buffer Zone and/or improves the natural function of the Buffer Zone to protect the adjacent Wetland resources.

Restrictions

Since approximately 25% of the land in Boxborough is Wetland, many properties in Town are subject to regulation under the Town By-Law. These regulations include strict limits on clearing, cutting, filling, construction, and other activity in the Buffer Zone, and typically require an Owner to file a Request for Determination (RDA) or Notice of Intent (NOI) before conducting any work.

Exemptions

The Conservation Commission acknowledges that certain types of maintenance activity in the Buffer Zone that are subject to regulation under Town By-Law are minor in nature and may be allowed as exempt maintenance activity.

Exempt minor maintenance activities include the following:

1. Cutting and removal of storm damaged trees per the separate Storm Damage Policy or that otherwise present a direct threat to personal safety or property.
2. Cutting and removal of invasive plants limited to activity that does not include excavation, fill or any other disturbance that results in the removal or destruction of other natural vegetative cover and/or canopy.
3. Maintenance of existing lawn, patios, decks, walking paths, fences, play areas, utility and accessory structures, and landscape features that predate the By-Law or that are otherwise

allowed under an existing Order of Conditions. Activity that replaces, expands and/or alters the character of such existing features is not exempt.

4. Tree removal or trimming that is limited to the removal of dead, diseased, or damaged branches, or removal of branches that encroach or otherwise interfere with existing features under item number 3.

Any activity not clearly conforming to the above shall not be exempt and shall require an RDA or NOI filing. If you have any questions about what is, or isn't, allowed under this policy, please call the Conservation Commission at 978-264-1722.

This policy revokes and replaces all previous policies on this topic, including the policy approved on 4/17/2013 and revised and approved on 4/18/2018.