



# Land Alteration of Steep Slopes and in Shoreland Areas

A **steep slope** is defined as land having an average slope **over 12 percent**, as measured over horizontal distances of 50 feet or more that are not bluffs. **Alteration** of land **on steep slopes** and **in shoreland areas** must meet administrative **standards** and may require a **performance standard permit**, depending on the extent of work.

## Steep Slopes in Shoreland Areas Administrative Standards

**Permit Required:** For any land use permit in areas where slope exceeds 12 percent over a horizontal distance of 50 or more feet, the Director may require the applicant to **submit the following information:**

1. A plan on how **erosion** will be **prevented**.
2. A plan on how existing **vegetation** will be **preserved**.
3. A plan on how the **structures** and **vehicles** will be **screened** from public waters.

## Land Alterations within 300 Feet of Lakes and Rivers Administrative and Performance Standards

**Minimum Standards for All Alterations:** The following standards shall apply to **all land alterations** whether they require a permit or not:

1. Alterations shall **be designed** and constructed to **ensure the least amount** of bare **ground** is **exposed**.
2. **Mulches** or similar materials shall be used for **temporary bare ground coverage**, and the disturbed area shall be **stabilized** with **permanent vegetative cover** within **seven days** of completion of permitted activity.
3. Accepted methods to **prevent** or **limit erosion** and trap sediment shall be employed (e.g. silt fences, diversions, and sediment traps).
4. Altered areas shall be **stabilized** according to accepted **engineering or soil erosion standards**.
5. Material **shall not be** placed in a manner that **creates an unstable slope**, or in **bluff impact zones**.
6. Plans to place material on steep slopes shall be reviewed by qualified professionals, and the **finished slope** shall **not exceed 20 percent**.
7. **One** alteration is **allowed** per minimum lot area and width requirement for the dimensional district, or group of contiguous non-conforming lots in the same ownership.
8. Any alteration **below** the ordinary high water level (**OHWL**) must comply with Minnesota Statutes, **chapter 103G**.

# Land Alterations within 300 Feet of Lakes and Rivers Administrative and Performance Standards

**No Permit Required:** No permit shall be required for the following land alterations:

1. Excavation, grading and filling that is **associated with construction of permitted** structures; driveways located **at the shoreline setback or greater**; walking paths; permitted sewage treatment systems; farm fields; other agricultural use; and gardens, provided **minimum standards above are met**.
2. **Any alteration** of the natural topography, **located outside the shore impact zone** and up to **300 feet from the shoreline**, involving **less than 50 cubic yards** of material.
3. Shoreline **riprap** projects that **comply** with state rules and/or receive a **DNR waters permit** or do not require a DNR riprap permit for shoreline alteration.

**Permit Required:** A **performance standard permit** shall be required for the following land alterations:

1. **Any alteration** of the natural topography located within the shore impact zone or within 50 feet of the shore, whichever is more restrictive, **bluff impact zone**, or on a **steep slope**.
2. **Any alteration** of natural topography, located **outside the shore impact zone** or **bluff impact zone** that **exceeds 50 cubic yards** of material.
3. Shoreline **riprap** projects that **do not follow DNR permit** requirements or do not comply with state rules for shoreline alterations.

**Performance standards shall be the minimum standards for all land alterations.**

**Alterations Not Allowed:** The following land alterations are **not** allowed:

1. Activities that cause the **potential for soil erosion**.
2. Alteration that will **impede the drainage** of adjacent properties.
3. **Removal** of herbaceous and woody **vegetation within shore** and **bluff impact zones** and on **steep slopes**.
4. Private water craft **accesses located on steep slopes**.
5. Activities in **designated wetland areas** according to state, county and federal regulations.

## St Louis County Planning and Community Development

### DULUTH OFFICE

Government Services Center (GSC)  
320 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 301  
Duluth, MN 55802  
Phone: (218) 725-5000  
Fax: (218) 725-5029  
Toll Free MN: 1-800-450-9777

### VIRGINIA OFFICE

Elizabeth Prebich Building  
201 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West  
Virginia, MN 55792  
Phone: (218) 749-7103  
Fax: (218) 749-7194  
Toll Free MN: 1-800-450-9777