

## Chapter 1298. General Provisions

### § 1298.17. Riparian and wetlands buffers.

[Ord. 332. Passed 10-21-1996. Ord. 349. Passed 3-23-1998. Ord. 374. Passed 8-15-2000]

For the purpose of preventing groundwater contamination, reducing surface run-off and sedimentation of nearby streams and bodies of water, protecting sensitive wildlife habitats, minimizing disruption to the hydrology of riparian and wetlands sites and preventing damage to dwellings and properties as a result of construction on or adjacent to alluvial soils or construction adjacent to active creeks, streams, watercourses, waters of the Commonwealth, waters of the United States of America, riparian and wetlands buffers shall be established as follows:

- (a) The minimum riparian or wetlands buffer shall extend outward 25 feet from the following:
  - (1) The edge of any wetlands as delineated on an official map approved by the Lower Gwynedd Township Board of Supervisors;
  - (2) The top of any banks of any active creek, stream or other watercourses;
  - (3) The edge of any waters of the commonwealth and/or waters of the United States of America;  
or
  - (4) The center line of any floodplain if the distance from the center line to the outside edge of the floodplain is less than 25 feet.
- (b) Where the three hundred feet of land adjacent to a riparian or wetland boundary has an upland slope greater than 10%, the minimum buffer which shall be increased by four feet for each degree of slope above 10% shall be added to the minimum riparian or wetlands buffer set forth in Subsection **(a)** above.
- (c) No filling, grading, clearing or development related to any structure or improvement, including stormwater management facilities, shall be permitted within any wetlands, active creeks, streams, watercourses, waters of the commonwealth, waters of the United States of America, wetlands buffers or riparian buffers. Upon proof that no reasonable engineering alternative exists, stormwater management facilities, utility crossings, public roads, private roads and driveway crossings may be permitted by conditional use. Any wetlands, active creeks, streams, watercourses, waters of the commonwealth, waters of the United States of America, wetlands buffers or riparian buffers permitted to be filled or otherwise destroyed by conditional use shall be replaced elsewhere on the site, in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, so that the total predevelopment area shall not be reduced.