

Buffers are a natural way to protect water courses.



Stream Buffers are 100 ft along perennial streams and 50 ft along intermittent streams. Stream buffers protect stream banks from erosion and improve water quality.



Shoreline buffers are 50 ft from the shoreline of ponds and lakes. Shoreline buffers protect shores from erosion and enhance the integrity of the lake or pond.

Water Quality Buffer Quick Facts

- Floodway areas greater than and equal to 100 or 50 ft may be used as the water quality buffer area.
- Utilities are allowed in water quality buffers, but must remain 25ft from the stream or shoreline.
- The buffer area can be increased based on neighboring land use or slope.
- Single family lots not associated with a larger common development are exempt from the buffer requirement.
- Properties less than 5 acres are exempt from the water quality buffer requirements.

More information on stream and shoreline buffers can be found in Chapter 3 of the Lexington County Land Development Manual located at www.lex-co.com/departments/publicwoks/stormwater.html.



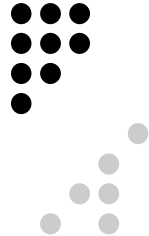
The Natural Way to Protect Waterways

Stormwater Division
440 Ball Park Road
Lexington, SC 29072

Phone: 803-785-8201
Fax: 803-785-8593

Water Quality Buffers

The Natural Way to Protect Waterways

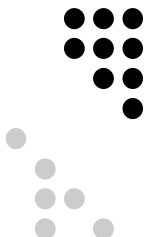


Public Works Stormwater Division

803-785-8201



Water Quality Buffers



Water quality buffers (a.k.a. riparian buffers) are areas of natural vegetation along a waterbody such as lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands. Water quality buffers aid waterways by stabilizing stream banks, filtering pollutants, and slowing stormwater runoff entering the waterway.

There are three main types of water quality buffers:

- Grass buffers- lowest pollutant removal potential
- Shrub buffers- higher pollutant removal efficiency and limited flood control
- Forest buffers: highest pollutant removal efficiency and flood control

Lexington County requires water quality buffers in an effort to protect riparian and aquatic ecosystems, improve water quality, and provide for the environmentally sound use of the County's land resources.

Lexington County Stream Buffer Requirements

Lexington County requires a 100 ft buffer on all perennial streams and a 50 ft buffer on all intermittent streams as identified on a 7.5 USGS quad map, US Army Corp of Engineers of the Public Works Stormwater Division.

Stream buffers cannot be disturbed during project construction and must be left in the existing conditions upon completion of construction activities. The area associated with a stream buffer may be dedicated to the County, turned over to a Homeowners Association, or included as part of a conservation easement. Stream buffers shall be maintained in accordance with Lexington County's maintenance and inspection requirements for permanent stormwater management structures.

Stream buffers must be marked with permanent signage to inform the public that water quality buffers may not be disturbed.

Lexington County Shoreline Buffer Requirements

Lexington County requires a 50 ft buffer along shorelines associated with ponds

and lakes that are fed by springs or streams. For ponds and lakes, the shoreline is considered the 100-yr high water elevation. For Lake Murray the shoreline is considered the 360 elevation.

Shoreline buffers are considered areas of managed vegetation. Limited clearing of understory trees and shrubs are allowed to provide access to the shoreline and view corridors.

Permanent signage is not required, but is recommended, on shoreline buffers. Management and maintenance requirements of shoreline buffers are the same as those for stream buffers.

Lexington County Wetland Buffer Requirements

Lexington County requires a 50 ft buffer around wetlands associated with a stream and those not associated with a water body. The buffer should be measured from the edge of the delineated wetland area. The management, maintenance, and signage requirements listed under stream buffers also apply to wetland buffers.