



**Town of Barnstable
Conservation Commission**
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Barnstable Conservation Commission

Guidelines for Private Freshwater Docks, Piers & Floats

The terms “docks, piers & floats” are used interchangeably. While each application for a freshwater pier will be reviewed on its own merits, the Commission expects that the proposed pier will generally comply with the following guidelines:

- 1. Seasonal:** The pier should be seasonally deployed no earlier than April 1, and removed no later than November 1.
- 2. Materials:** The pier should be manufactured from suitable materials such as aluminum, plastic or composite, but not pressure-treated wood.
- 3. Length and Width:** The pier length should reflect that of existing nearby piers on the pond or similar ponds. Floats should not be allowed to ground the substrate. The maximum pier width should be 4 feet. The end float(s) or platform for berthing vessels should be no greater than 96 square feet.
- 4. Access:** Access should be provided as a means for along-shore public traverse. If the pier is located on a great pond,* access is required by Ch. 91.
- 5. Off-season Storage:** Pier sections should be stored in an upland location and not in the buffer zone.
- 6. Centering:** The pier should be near the centerline of the lot and perpendicular to the shore.
- 7. Depth:** When a motorboat is to be berthed at the pier, the minimum depth should be 12 inches under the draft of the boat, with the motor in the downward position, so as to avoid damaging the substrate and causing re-suspension of sediments that could be harmful to any shellfish, finfish, or aquatic plant species that may be present.

*Great ponds are under the jurisdiction of Chapter 91. A great pond is defined as any pond or lake that contained more than 10 acres in its natural state, whether now or in the past. Check the following website for a listing of all great ponds located in the Massachusetts:

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/watersheds/massachusetts-great-ponds-list.html