

Why obtain approval?

Any successful project starts with good planning. The consultation and permitting process with CH or HCA will help to ensure this by providing access to knowledgeable professionals who can advise you on matters related to natural hazard risks and natural heritage protection. CH and HCA staff are also available to meet with you in person and/or at your property to review project plans and provide advice. When reviewing your project, CH and HCA staff will help to ensure it meets the following objectives:

- Activities and development are not exposed to risks associated with floodplains and erosion areas, or unstable soil and bedrock in order to prevent loss of life and minimize property damage.
- Activities and development do not increase or aggravate flood and erosion risks to upstream and downstream landowners.
- The hydrologic functions of wetlands and watercourses, including water storage and discharge, are protected.

How do I obtain approval?

It is recommended that you contact CH or HCA to discuss your proposal before submitting a permit application. Staff will review your proposal and determine if it requires approval. If approval is required staff will identify what information must be submitted with your application along with the corresponding fee. Application forms and fee schedules are available on the CH and HCA websites or by contacting CH or HCA directly.

Note: Other permissions may be required from federal, provincial, and municipal bodies. It is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain all of the necessary approvals that are relevant to your project.

The permit process

To assess applications for approval, CH and HCA follow the directions contained in the *Conservation Halton Policies and Guidelines for the Administration of Ontario Regulation 162/06 and Land Use Planning Policy Document, April 27, 2006 (Revised August 11, 2011)* or *Hamilton Conservation Authority Planning and Regulation Policies and Guidelines*, October 2011, whichever applies.

These documents contain the policies that guide decisions regarding approvals and were developed in consultation with many stakeholders, including the agricultural community. For policy details, please refer to these documents. They can be obtained from www.conservationhalton.ca or www.conservationhamilton.ca or contact conservation authority staff for further clarity.

Review times and re-submissions are directly affected by the completeness and quality of the original application. To ensure that your application is complete, CH and HCA recommend that you pre-consult with staff before submitting your application.

Once CH or HCA staff have completed their technical review and all technical and policy requirements have been met, the permit will be issued. If a permit cannot be supported by staff, a recommendation will be made to the CH or HCA Board of Directors for refusal of your permit. In this case, you are entitled to a hearing before the Board of Directors asking for an exception to Board-approved policies.

Note: Lands outside of the jurisdiction of Conservation Halton and Hamilton Conservation Authority watershed are subject to the policies and procedures of other Conservation Authorities.

We are here to help. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your proposed project, please contact your local conservation authority and one of our staff will be pleased to assist you.



t: 905.336.1158
f: 905.336.6684
envserv@hrca.on.ca
2596 Britannia Road West
Burlington, ON L7P 0G3
conservationhalton.ca



t: 905.525.2181
f: 905.648.4622
nature@conservationhamilton.ca
838 Mineral Springs Road
Ancaster, ON L9G 4X1
conservationhamilton.ca

An Agricultural Guide to Conservation Authority Regulations





A significant portion of the land base within the Conservation Halton (CH) and Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) watersheds is dedicated to agriculture. Agriculture is a defining attribute of the rural landscape of the watersheds, and a major economic driver in the region, and province more broadly. Farmers are also valued environmental stewards of the land. Many farms contain important natural heritage features and resources (wetlands, watercourses, etc.), which have benefited from the protection and stewardship efforts of farmers.

Ontario’s Conservation Authorities have a shared interest in ensuring environmentally sustainable stewardship of the land. As watershed-based agencies, both CH and HCA are dedicated to the management and conservation of land and water resources for the benefit of people, communities and the environment.

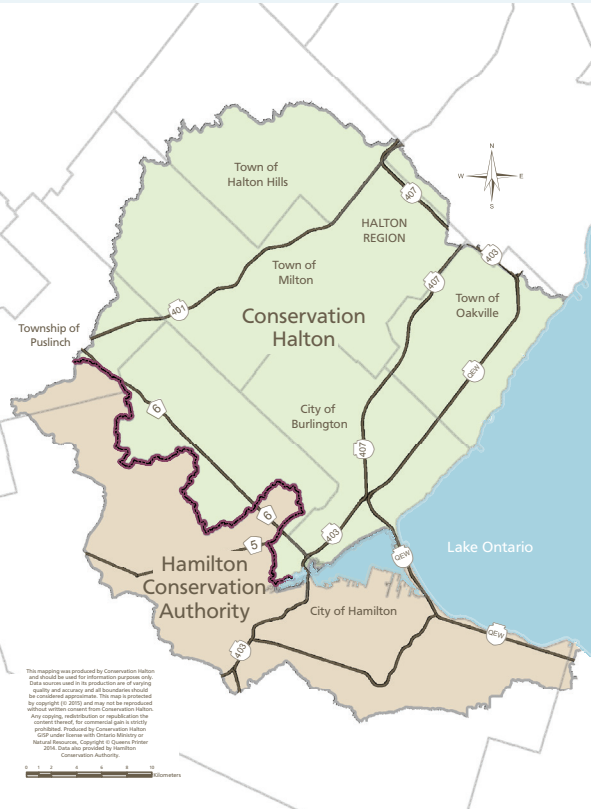
To assist in achieving these objectives, CH and HCA administer regulations which may require consultation and approval for certain types of activities, in certain locations. Agricultural activities occurring within or adjacent to watercourses, river or stream valleys, floodplains, Great Lakes shorelines, wetlands, and other hazardous lands may require written permission from Conservation Halton

or Hamilton Conservation Authority before the works can proceed. Written permission is normally in the form of a permit or letter of permission.

This guide provides a general overview of the CH and HCA regulations, and identifies when approvals may be required and the process for obtaining them.

This guide is also intended to promote on-going and open communications between the agricultural community and CH and HCA, and to support our mutual interests in ensuring environmentally sustainable practices and stewardship of the land and water resources within our watersheds.

Map of the Conservation Halton and Hamilton Conservation Authority watersheds



Does my activity require approval?

Conservation Authorities regulate activities and building construction in or near certain natural features and hazardous areas. These include watercourses, river and stream valleys, floodplains, Great Lakes shorelines, wetlands, and other hazardous lands (e.g. unstable soils or bedrock). These areas, plus additional adjacent lands (or allowances), are regulated to help protect people and property from flooding and erosion hazards, and to conserve important natural lands. Agricultural activities occurring within regulated areas may require written permission from CH or HCA before the works can proceed. Written permission is normally in the form of a permit or letter of permission. The following table provides an overview of some common agricultural activities and their associated requirements. If you are uncertain whether or not your activity or project may require approval, you are encouraged to contact CH or HCA to discuss your plans in greater detail.

Agricultural activities within a regulated area that generally do not require approval unless they would interfere with a watercourse (i.e. drainage ditch, creek, lake) or wetland:

- Existing agricultural uses, including cropping, pasturing, tilling, fence row clearing, weeding, etc.
- Maintenance and upkeep of existing buildings and structures (e.g. window repair, siding, etc.)
- Non-structural activities/uses that do not result in alterations to existing property grades (e.g. gardens, nurseries, timber harvesting, etc.)
- Removal of dead, diseased or hazard trees; planting trees; clearing or burning of brush
- Well installation
- Fence and gate installation and maintenance
- Beaver dam removal
- Pond installation for the sole purpose of watering livestock

Agricultural activities within a regulated area that would require review and approval:

- Construction of a new building or structure*
- Replacement, reconstruction or relocation of an existing building or structure
- Watercourse channel realignment, channelization, straightening, etc.
- Enclosing, burying or piping a watercourse
- Fill placement, excavation or grade changes*
- Dredging, trenching, ditching a watercourse
- Pond installation (where not for the sole purpose of livestock watering)*
- Bridge construction or replacement
- Culvert installation or replacement
- Erosion protection associated with a watercourse or valleyland
- Bed-level crossing installation
- Installation of field tile drainage
- Installation of a utility connection (e.g. telephone, cable, gas lines, etc.)*

* May be supported in regulated lands adjacent to the natural hazard, but generally not in the natural hazard

Note: The Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Act Protocol provide a consistent set of provincial standards to guide municipal drain maintenance and repair activities for agricultural drains approved under the Drainage Act. The Protocol will be used by municipalities, Conservation Halton and Hamilton Conservation Authority to streamline our permit requirements.