



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers ®
Charleston District

Regulatory Permitting Program

Point of Contact: Tina Hadden
Phone: 843-329-8044
E-mail: tina.hadden@usace.army.mil

Who Should Obtain a Permit?

Any person, firm, or agency (including Federal, state, and local government agencies) planning to work in navigable waters of the United States, or dispose or place dredged or fill material in waters of the United States or wetlands, must first obtain a permit from the Corps of Engineers.

When should I apply for a Corps permit?

Since two to three months is normally required to process a routine application involving a public notice, you should apply as early as possible to be sure you have all required approvals before your planned commencement date. For a large or complex activity that may take longer, it is often helpful to have a "pre-application consultation" or informal meeting with the Corps during the early planning phase of your project. You may receive helpful information at this point that could prevent delays later.

How do I apply for a Corps permit?

The Charleston District has developed Joint Processing Procedures with the State of South Carolina and uses a modified application form for joint processing with the State. You may download a copy of the joint application form from our website or you may obtain one from our office. It is important that you provide the complete information in the requested format. This information will be used to determine the appropriate form of authorization, and to evaluate your proposal. Some categories of activities may qualify for abbreviated permit processing, in which a permit decision can usually be reached in less than 30 days. For other activities, a Public Notice may be required to notify Federal, state, and local agencies, adjacent property owners, and the general public of the proposal to allow an opportunity for review and comment or to request a public hearing.

What will happen if I do work without getting a permit from the Corps?

Performing unauthorized work in waters of the United States or failure to comply with the terms of a valid permit can have serious consequences. You would be in violation of Federal law and could face stiff penalties, including fines and/or requirements to restore the area.

How can I design my project to eliminate the need for a Corps permit?

If your activity is located in an area of tidal waters, the best way to avoid the need for a permit is to select a site that is above the high tide line and avoids wetlands or other waterbodies. In the vicinity of fresh water, stay above ordinary high water and avoid wetlands adjacent to the stream or lake. Also, it is possible that your activity is exempt and does not need a Corps permit or that it has been authorized by a nationwide or regional general permit. So, before you build, dredge or fill, contact the Corps district regulatory office for specific information about location, exemptions, and regional and nationwide general permits.