Mooring Disturbance Standard

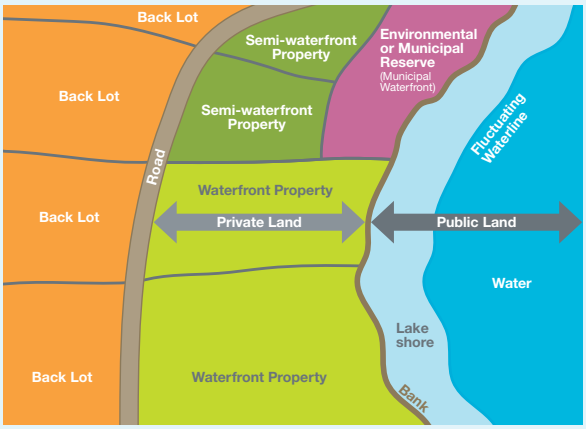
Shared Docks Fact Sheet

Environment and Parks has developed a disturbance standard for temporary seasonal mooring structures, such as docks and boat lifts.

The goal of the disturbance standard is to establish clear rules for temporary seasonal mooring structures to safely and fairly accommodate recreational use of Alberta's lakes and rivers, while streamlining the authorization process for temporary mooring structures.

The disturbance standard applies to seasonal mooring structures for waterfront, semi-waterfront and municipal waterfront property owners.

Multiple parties can share docks under the disturbance standard. Depending on which parties are sharing a dock, different rules will apply on the size. Sharing docks is encouraged by Environment and Parks as it limits the number of docks and shoreline disturbance in a waterbody.



A back lot property owner is one who does not share a property boundary with a waterbody or have direct access to it.

A semi-waterfront landowner is someone who owns the land directly adjoining a municipal or environmental reserve that directly adjoins the bank of a waterbody.

A waterfront landowner owns the land directly adjoining the bank of a waterbody.

Docks shared by adjacent waterfront or semi-waterfront property owners

Docks that are shared by waterfront or semi-waterfront property owners will be required to meet all of the criteria in the disturbance standard to be exempt from having to obtain an authorization. No setback is required along the shared projected property line (which extends through the municipal reserve parcel for semi-waterfront property owners). The dock may be placed within the larger combined mooring area that is now created, giving the shared users much more flexibility in the placement of the dock's location.

Docks shared by waterfront or semi-waterfront and back lot owners

The waterfront or semi-waterfront landowner will always be responsible for boat lifts and docks placed in their mooring area, whether they are the primary owner of the mooring structure or not. Mooring structures will be required to meet all of the criteria in the disturbance standard, even if being shared with back lot owners. Additional boat lifts may be placed within the defined mooring area, but the waterfront or semi-waterfront landowner may only have one dock. The combined mooring structures including associated lifts cannot exceed 50% of their property width.

Back lot owners can co-own a dock with the waterfront or semi-waterfront landowner to share the associated costs.

Back lot owners can also enter into shared use agreements with waterfront or semi-waterfront landowners, where they do not co-own the dock, but have an agreement to be able to use it.

Alberta

Community Docks and Marinas

The local municipality or another user group (e.g. home owner association, condominium or bareland strata, church group, service organization, etc.) may want to create a community dock in front of a waterfront property. Community docks are a way to provide recreational access to the lake and boat moorage for back lot owners and others who do not share a dock with waterfront or semi-waterfront landowners.

If someone wishes to create a community dock, they must apply for an authorization from Environment and Parks. Community docks are generally much larger than a personal dock, so consent of the municipality is required if they are not the party submitting the application.

Once a community dock is created, the owner is responsible for managing users and allocating moorage slips based on their authorization from the department.

A marina allows multiple boats to be moored along one or more dock walkways with multiple slips. Allocation of slips is not necessarily restricted to community residents. Marinas are generally for commercial use. If a fee is charged for moorage rental (other than administration or maintenance costs), then the department will consider the mooring structure as a commercial enterprise subject to the associated fees, rents or royalties payable to the Crown by the owner.