

# Beavers

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Although beavers provide many positive environmental values, they can also cause property damage. Presently, beavers are abundant in Minnesota. To help landowners and others manage beaver damage, the Minnesota DNR offers the following information and advice.

## Methods for exclusion and damage prevention

- In some situations, water levels in the beaver pond may be controlled by special devices such as the [Clemson beaver pond leveler \(PDF\)](#).



([https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/backyard/privatelandhabitat/clemson\\_beaver\\_pond\\_leveler.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/backyard/privatelandhabitat/clemson_beaver_pond_leveler.pdf)).

For information and technical assistance, contact your [local DNR area wildlife office \(PDF\)](#).

([https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fish\\_wildlife/wildlife/wildlife\\_managers.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fish_wildlife/wildlife/wildlife_managers.pdf)). The levelers are no longer available from Minncor, but can be built using a few basic tools and information in the brochure.

- Protect individual trees in your yard by placing hardware cloth cylinders at least 30" tall around the base of the tree. Energized fencing can protect larger areas.
- Plant native evergreens such as common juniper (*Juniperus communis*) that beaver do not like or other shrubs that regrow after some beaver damage (i.e. red osier dogwood, pussy or prairie willow).
- Create a buffer strip of native vegetation suited to your location. Visit the [Lakescaping \(/lakescaping/maintaining-and-restoring-natural-shorelines.html\)](#) Web page for additional help with your shoreland management.

## Removal methods

In many cases, beaver damage cannot be effectively managed unless the offending beavers are removed (killed). Removing a dam without removing the resident beavers generally results in the dam being immediately rebuilt. To remove a beaver dam that is causing flooding, a permit is not needed if:

- Removal of the dam does not constitute work in Public Waters (contact your [local DNR area hydrologist \(PDF\)](#) ([https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/area\\_hydros.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/area_hydros.pdf)) for a determination).
- The dam is located on land owned or managed by the individual experiencing the flooding.
- If the dam is NOT on land owned or managed by the individual experiencing flooding and permission has been granted by the land owner or manager.
- Authorized by state statute (i.e. road authorities, drainage authorities).

**The DNR encourages property owners to work with local trappers to take beaver causing damage during the open trapping season.** No permit is needed for a licensed trapper during the regular beaver season. Your local Conservation Officer or Area Wildlife Office may have names of local experienced trappers who may be willing to assist in trapping beaver for you. Fees, if any, will vary with seasons and individuals.

**No Permit is Required Minnesota Statute 97B.655** which allows a landowner or legal occupant (e.g., authorized renter), or their authorized agent, to shoot or trap beaver that are causing damage. No license or permit is required if all four of these conditions are met:

1. The landowner/occupant must have beaver damage to their property.
2. The landowner/occupant must authorize the removal.
3. The animal must be on that landowner's/occupant's property, where it is causing damage, at the time it is shot or trapped.
4. The person taking the beaver must notify the DNR within 24 hours, by following the Reporting Requirements listed below.

**The reporting requirements for a person who takes beaver causing damage, without a permit,** is they must contact the local DNR Conservation Officer or Area Wildlife staff within 24 hours of killing the beaver. It is sufficient to leave a message or e-mail the [Information Center \(mailto: info.dnr@state.mn.us\)](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us) ☎ 1-888-MINNDNR stating your name, address, telephone number, the total number of beaver shot or trapped, along with a brief explanation of the damage and location the beaver was shot or trapped.

**A permit is required if the above conditions are not met.** This permit is issued by the local conservation officer or regional wildlife manager, is free, and authorizes beaver to be taken out of season and without a license. All federal, state, or local regulations apply. This permit does not allow trespassing, using poison, using artificial lights or the discharge of firearms or use of traps where prohibited. Live relocation of beavers is not allowed.

**Federal, state, county, township or local governmental employees,** while on duty as a representative of that government, do not need a permit while doing beaver removal on land under their jurisdiction.

- **Statute 97B.667 Removal of beaver dams and lodges by road authorities.** When a drainage watercourse is impaired by a beaver dam and the water damages, or threatens to damage a public road, the road authority, as defined in section 160.02, subdivision 25, may remove the impairment and any associated beaver lodge within 300 feet of the road. Before killing or arranging to kill a beaver under Subd. 3. (a), the road authority or government unit must contact a conservation officer for a special beaver permit if the beaver will be killed within two weeks before or after the trapping season for beaver, and the conservation officer must issue the permit for any beaver subject to this section.

### **Affecting public waters**

In some cases, lakeshore has been developed in conformance with water levels resulting from a beaver dam controlling the outlet for many years. Before removing a beaver dam in that situation, contact the DNR Area Hydrologist.