

Quick Reference Guide for Determining the Water Quality Buffer Requirements for a Specific Parcel

Water quality buffers apply when stream or lake shoreline exists on property and the property is not exempt from the buffer requirements based on the governing ordinance.

Links below explain:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg's water quality buffers
- Step-by-step process for determining the buffer requirements for each parcel
- If any disturbances are allowed in the buffer on that parcel
- If a buffer disturbance could be allowed with mitigation
- How to mitigate an illegal buffer disturbance

Overview of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's water quality buffers. [Details](#)

How to determine if water quality buffer requirements apply to a specific parcel

1. Determine if the stream channel is piped in which case water quality buffers do not apply. [Details](#)
2. Identify the type of buffer that might apply and the jurisdiction. [Details](#)
3. Confirm whether the buffer requirements apply by reviewing the applicability requirements for the corresponding ordinance. [Details](#)
4. Delineate the stream or lake shoreline on the property. [Details](#)
5. Delineate the water quality buffer area on the property. [Details](#)

Sometimes, buffer disturbances are allowed under the law

1. Categories of buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
2. Water Supply Watershed buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
3. S.W.I.M. and Post-Construction buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
4. Goose and Six Mile Creek buffer disturbances. [Details](#)

Sometimes, a buffer can be disturbed if it is properly mitigated

1. General information applicable to obtaining approval for all types of buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
2. Water Supply Watershed buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
3. S.W.I.M. and Post-Construction buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
4. Goose and Six Mile Creek buffer disturbances. [Details](#)

Violations

A buffer disturbance is considered to be in violation if that disturbance is not allowed by the governing ordinance and if there is no approved mitigation plan. The following actions are required to achieve compliance and avoid penalties:

1. Mitigating illegal buffer disturbances. [Details](#)
2. Seeking a Variance from Water Quality Buffer requirements. [Details](#)
3. Seeking an Appeal for Water Quality Buffer requirements. [Details](#)