



# Raisin Region Conservation Authority

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March 14, 2024

Dear Member Municipalities,

## Re: *Conservation Authority Act* updates and new Regulations

The Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA) regulates development activities within natural hazard areas including floodplains, unstable slopes, and wetlands under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Property owners in these regulated areas require RRCA permission to undertake development activities including, but not limited to, the construction or reconstruction of a building; site grading; the placement or removal of fill; or activities that interfere with the existing channel of a watercourse or a wetland.

On April 1, 2024, several amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act will come into effect along with a new provincial regulation – O. Reg. 41/24 Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits. While much of RRCA's regulatory role protecting people and property from natural hazards will remain the same, there are some changes.

### Effective April 1, 2024

Property owners will still be required to apply for a permit from the RRCA to undertake otherwise prohibited development activities in regulated areas. The new regulation, however, will introduce a few changes, notably:

- Reduction of regulated area adjacent to wetlands to 30 metres.
- Removal of permit tests regarding controlling pollution and conservation of land.
- Addition of permit tests to ensure development does not result in the damage or destruction of property.
- New permit exemptions for certain low-risk activities (e.g. non-habitable structures 15m<sup>2</sup> or less in size; certain fencing; maintenance or repair of a driveway under certain conditions; maintenance or repair of municipal drains previously reviewed under the DART protocol).

Property owners who plan to undertake development activities that are exempt from a conservation authority permit beginning April 1, 2024, are encouraged to confirm with RRCA staff that their project meets the exemption criteria.



### **Planning Act Implications**

The legislative changes do not impact the planning services delegated to conservation authorities related to natural hazards review. Municipalities must continue to circulate planning applications and other matters under the *Planning Act* to conservation authorities for review and comment on natural hazards.

### **Transition Plan**

Conservation authorities are working together to ensure a smooth transition and will work to minimize disruptions to approval processes and development applications. The RRCA is working to review and update our regulatory mapping and review policies where needed to reflect the new regulation. Permit applications submitted to conservation authorities prior to April 1, 2024, will continue to be processed under the current permitting process, while applications submitted on or after April 1, 2024, will be processed under the new regulation.

### **More Information**

More information on the new regulation and Conservation Authorities Act amendments can be found in the decision notice on the Environmental Registry of Ontario, posting #019-2927: Proposed updates to the regulation of development for protection of people and property from natural hazards in Ontario. (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2927>)

We will continue to keep you informed as we transition to the new regulation. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact myself or our planning and regulations staff with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Pilon', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Richard Pilon  
General Manager