

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING OFFICE

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March 4, 2010

To: All Permit Applicants
Re: New Critical Area Buffer Regulations

As of March 8, 2010 new State of Maryland Critical Area Commission buffer regulations will become effective. If you are making an application for development (Building Permit) for property in the Critical Area these additional regulations may apply to you.

The new regulations may impact your permit approval for construction of new structures like a home or other buildings, additions to existing structures, outbuildings or accessory structures including garages, sheds, decks, swimming pools and other land disturbance activity.

If your building project location is proposed within the Critical Area and a buffer applies to your property, then the new regulations will require that you submit additional information, possibly complete additional plantings, and/or revise the location of your proposed structure. The permit review process may also require additional time to accurately evaluate your permit request for compliance with these regulations.

The new regulations may require in many cases that the tidewater buffer located on properties with hydric soils or non-tidal wetlands to be expanded to include those soils or wetlands. Development in these buffer areas may be limited or restricted completely.

Please keep in mind that these new regulations are State standards that must be implemented and enforced at the local level. We will do everything we can to assist you in compliance with the regulations.