

Below are some "rules of thumb" that we at Fairfield SWCD often recommend to folks. Some information is found on our website in more detail at [www.fairfieldswcd.org](http://www.fairfieldswcd.org).

### **PONDS:**

#### **DO:**

- Follow Ohio Dam Safety Laws
- hire a soil scientist or experienced contractor to do soil test pits prior to building a pond or dam to ensure soils are suitable for pond construction
- consider watershed size, we recommend 10 acres of drainage:1 acre of pond surface area
- research whether there may be tile that will need to be rerouted around the pond. You can look through several years of aerial maps on Google Earth. Our office has some also.
- monitor critter damage (beaver, muskrats, grass carp, groundhogs, etc.) and address immediately
- monitor outlet structures after heavy rain events for damage or debris that could cause clogging
- maintain an area at least 6' deep for fish habitat
- maintain a level top of dam, otherwise if overtopped a low area could severely erode
- compact Bentonite with a sheepsfoot roller if adding to pond to seal it
- check to see if your proposed pond will need to be permitted through ODNR-Division of Dam Safety at <http://soilandwater.ohiodnr.gov/safety/dam-safety#PER>
- provide readily accessible safety equipment/rescue devices
- remove submerged safety hazards and any debris that could cause clogging
- contact your local fire department if you are building a pond and are considering installing a dry fire hydrant
- consider aeration to provide oxygen
- take a look at our "Pond Design & Management" booklet on our website for general information, design/construction, fish stocking, vegetation control, etc.
- only spray vegetation/weeds with chemicals that are labeled for aquatic use

#### **DON'T:**

- don't back water up onto neighboring properties
- don't plant water lilies; they are invasive and will take over quickly
- it is not recommended to share ownership of a pond with a neighbor without clear legal agreements
- don't plant trees on the dam, roots can cause seepage

### **STREAMBANKS/DITCHES:**

#### **DO:**

- seek advice prior to placing hard materials (stone, etc.) in stream
- maintain vegetation (turf-type fescue recommended)
- use PVC for tile outlets, corrugated tile that dangles over a stream bank causes erosion
- rock pads below tile outlets where they drip can prevent bank erosion
- remove fallen trees quickly to avoid back-up or a logjam which erodes banks when water makes its way around it
- add rock in the toe of the stream bank to secure it as it is where water velocities erode the soil causing collapse of the area above it
- determine if permits are required for your planned work

#### **DON'T:**

- don't dump concrete over the bank, concrete floats
- don't spray herbicides creating bare soil that will erode easily

### **WATER PATTERNS/WATERWAYS:**

#### **DO:**

- Maintain vegetative cover where possible; turf-type fescue recommended
- Repair any tile blowholes as soon as possible to prevent additional erosion
- seed and mulch any bare areas that develop.

**DON'T:**

- don't pollute! Do not throw grass clippings or yard waste into any water course or pattern. Keep any compost/manure away that could leach into water.
- don't build structures - house, barn, shed, etc. in or too close to a water pattern
- don't drive across waterways when it is too wet; ruts could prevent proper flow

**DRAINAGE PROBLEMS:**

**DO:**

- work with your neighbors, in most cases drainage issues are a civil matter that must be resolved in court
- talk to previous landowner if you do not know where your drainage tiles are, if you have any (gutters/downspouts, leach field, perimeter/foundation drain, etc.)
- add animal guards to tile outlets, small critters can crawl into tiles and cause a blockage
- contact our office to look at historical aerial photos that may assist in identifying existing tiles

**DON'T:**

- don't plant trees near tile, unless the tile is non-perforated
- don't plant trees under power lines

**GENERAL:**

**DO:**

- if digging, first call OUPS (811) and Oil & Gas Producers Protection Service (OGPUPS) 800-925-0988 ext. 2 to have buried utilities located
- get all necessary local, state or federal permits

**WILDLIFE:**

**DO:**

- plant native plants around your landscape
- work on removing invasive plants from your property
- provide natural food, water and shelter for wildlife if possible
- enjoy viewing wildlife from a safe distance

**DON'T:**

- don't approach any wild animal that looks sick, injured or abandoned. Contact our office or the local wildlife officer.
- don't release any domestic animals (rabbits, reptiles, etc.) into the wild
- don't attempt to keep any wild animal as a pet (raccoon, groundhog, etc.)