



Slope Hazard Development Permit Area – FAQ's

District of North Vancouver

Environment Department - 355 West Queens Rd, North Vancouver, BC V7N 4N5

Questions about this form: Phone: 604-990-2311 or Email: enviropermits@dnv.org

1) Why Slope Hazard Protection?

The Slope Hazard Development Permit Area (DPA) includes properties near the crest (top) or base of steep slopes in the District. The Slope Hazard DPA is established to minimize the risk to people and property from slope hazards such as landslides and rock fall.

2) Where can I see a map of all of the Slope Hazard areas in the District?

The Slope Hazard areas are identified on Geoweb on the District's website at <http://geoweb.dnv.org/>. Under applications, properties, layers, layer manager, DPA Slope Hazard.

Further background information on potential slope hazards in some areas is also available on the District's website through the District's Natural Hazard Management Program
<http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?c=1024>

3) Which properties are included in the Slope Hazard DPA?

The Slope Hazard DPA applies to those properties having a boundary within 20 metres of the top or bottom of a steep slope. A steep slope is a slope with an angle greater than 20 degrees (36%) and greater than 10 metres in height.

4) When would I need a Slope Hazard Development Permit?

If your property is in the Slope Hazard DPA, and you are planning to build or alter the land, a Development Permit (DP) may be required. A property in a Slope Hazard DPA may also be in a Creek Hazard DPA and a Streamside Protection DPA; if so, the Development Permit will need to address all applicable DPAs. Certain exemptions apply (see Exemptions).

5) What are some common Exemptions (where no DP is required)?

The following do not require a Development Permit:

- Regular maintenance of existing buildings or landscaping;
- Development that takes place outside the Slope Hazard Area, provided that it does not impact the Slope Hazard Area or transfer risk to neighbouring properties;
- Non-structural repairs or renovation to a permanent structure on its existing foundation provided there is no expansion of the building foot print and provided that the repairs or renovations do not increase the gross floor area of the permanent structure;
- Construction of an accessory building of less than 25 square metres under certain circumstances;
- Replacement or repair of an existing deck providing that the location and dimensions of the deck do not change.

6) I am just doing an interior renovation; do I still need to go through this process?

No. Interior renovations are exempt from requiring a Slope Hazard Development Permit.

7) What do I need to do to apply for a Slope Hazard Development Permit?

A legal topographical survey showing the top of bank (TOB), a site plan showing the proposed location of the works to be undertaken, and potentially an assessment report from a Qualified Professional Engineer or Geoscientist identifying any risk and mitigation measures to be undertaken.

8) My house is already in the Slope Hazard Area. What should I do now?

The DPA guidelines recognize that on several properties in the District, the house, yard and existing landscaping already lie within the Slope Hazard Area. Any existing and lawfully constructed buildings, existing landscaping and other pre-existing land uses are considered to be "grandparented", that is, they can remain in place as they are. A Development Permit is required only if new development that encroaches further into the Slope Hazard Area is proposed.

9) I want to buy a house within the Slope Hazard Development Permit Area and I want to tear it down and build a new home. Can the original footprint of the home be 'grandparented'?

Only under certain circumstances would a historical foundation be grandparented. Grandparenting would only be considered if the historical foundation meets the other DPA requirements (for eg Streamside Protection) and can be demonstrated to be safe by a Qualified Professional. Generally, existing footprints or locations of structures are only grandparented in special circumstances involving catastrophic loss such as fire or flood, but most are still required to be certified as safe by a Qualified Professional.

10) How will the Slope Hazard DPA affect my property for future development?

A Qualified Professional Engineer or Geoscientist may be required to assess the proposed development and provide recommendations for risk reduction measures.

11) Will the Slope Hazard DP affect how large of a home I can build?

Protection from Slope Hazard is one of a number of legislated requirements of the DNV. Applying this and other requirements may in certain situations decrease the potential gross buildable floor area of a home. It is very important that you review the information on the District's website
<http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?a=5628&c=1166>

12) I want to build a basement in a house within the Slope Hazard DPA. What do I have to do?

Any new habitable space developed within the Slope Hazard DPA requires a report by a Qualified Professional that demonstrates that the proposed new development meets the DNV Risk Tolerance Policy for Natural Hazards and is safe for the use intended.

13) The owner of the property next door / across the street / at the end of my block built a new home, can I build mine like theirs?

Every lot is unique and not all lots are in the Slope Hazard Development Permit Area. Additionally, some lots are in other Development Permit areas; therefore, it is not possible to compare lots to each other.

14) Are there design restrictions for the Slope Hazard DP?

There are a number of guidelines that may impact design including locating buildings and structures as far as reasonably possible from steep slopes. Examples include:

- stepped and articulated buildings form that integrate and reflect the natural site contours and slope conditions should be used and large unbroken building masses that are unsuitable for sloped conditions should be avoided.
- The construction of structures, pathways/trails, utilities, drainage facilities, swimming pools. Hot tubs, ponds, landscaping or other uses at or near the top of base of any steep slope should be avoided. A minimum 10 metre buffer area from the top or base of any steep slope should be maintained free of development except as recommended by a qualified professional.

15) Can I build a swimming pool in the 10 metre buffer zone?

The construction of structures, pathways/trails, utilities, drainage facilities, swimming pools, hot tubs, ponds, landscaping or other uses at or near the top of base of any steep slope should be avoided. A minimum 10 metre buffer area from the top or base of any steep slope should be maintained free of development except as recommended by a qualified professional.

16) How long does the Slope Hazard DP process take?

Process time varies depending on whether or not there are any other DPs required, the completeness and accuracy of the reports and information received and the overall complexity of the project. There is often a pre-application stage to gather the environmental baseline information, and an application review stage which involves screening the information. Once all information is received, then processing generally takes 4 – 6 weeks. This may depend on whether additional information is required to process the application.

17) How much does a Slope Hazard DP cost?

The fees are set out in the Fees and Charges Bylaw. In 2014, the Development Permit fee is \$105 for a renovation or \$530 for a new home, plus a \$50 scanning fee.

18) Who do I hire for professional reports, surveys, etc.?

Qualified Professional (QP) means a professional with appropriate education, training and experience, fully insured and in good standing with the relevant professional association. For the purpose of the slope hazard assessment (Slope Hazard DPA) a specialist Professional Engineer or Professional Geoscientist, as appropriate, with experience or training in geotechnical and geohazard assessments, and/or structural engineering expertise in connection with mitigation works.

The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia is the licensing and regulatory body responsible for BC's professional engineers and geoscientists. The association is charged with protecting public safety in BC by setting and maintaining high standards of professional practice and ethical conduct for its members and licensees. For a list of QPs, see <https://www.apeg.bc.ca/Member-Directories>

19) When can I apply for my building permit?

Once staff has accepted a DPA package and no further design changes are expected, a Building Permit application will generally be accepted.

20) When did council adopt legislation requiring a Slope Hazard DPA?

The requirement for this DP is set out in Schedule B of the Official Community Plan adopted in July, 2012.

21) What do I submit if the property falls into multiple DPAs?

If your property falls into multiple DPAs please review all relevant information on the District's website <http://www.dnv.org/> prior to any type of design work. If clarification is still needed, you may contact staff in the Environment Section

You will need to designate a lead professional to coordinate the assessment report.

22) What do I do if the property is also within a DPA for:

- **Form & Character for Commercial, Industrial or Multi-Family Development and / or**
- **Energy & Water Conservation & Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions?**

If your property also falls within one of these DPAs, please review all relevant information on the District's website <http://www.dnv.org/> prior to any type of design work. The lead DNV staff contact will be a Development Planner. You can contact Development Planning by telephone at 604-990-2387 or by email at planning@dnv.org for an appointment.

23) Do District of North Vancouver (DNV) projects have to follow the DPA guidelines?

Yes all DNV projects are expected to follow the DPA guidelines. However, the DNV is responsible for maintaining and providing critical public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sanitary sewer pipes and for maintaining existing community service infrastructure.

Much of this infrastructure was installed many years ago when knowledge and requirements protecting the environment were not as prevalent. In many cases there were no regulations governing environmental protection at the time of design and construction. As a result much of this infrastructure is located in areas of sensitive environmental habitat that would be preferable to avoid all together. This is not always possible; however, the DNV strives to adhere to the most current environmental best management practices in all of our operations and capital projects.