

# GUIDANCE FOR SANDBAG USE ON LAKE ONTARIO



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

## SANDBAG PLACEMENT

- Sandbags must be filled with *clean* sand. Other fill materials such as gravel, concrete, or cement are not permitted.
- Sandbags must be filled using offsite sand. Sand must not be excavated or pumped from the beach or nearshore.
- Sandbags should never be used to protect against wave-based erosion of bluffs, beaches, or dune systems. Sandbags, which weigh approximately 30 pounds, are too light and will not stay in place during periods of high water and storm events. Wave action will cause the bags to be dislodged into the lake.
- Sandbags used near the shoreline must be placed on the landside of normal wave run-up to prevent the bags from being dislodged into the lake.
- Short-term alternatives to sand bags that may be used to protect against wave-based erosion include the use of larger (cubic yard or larger) sand bags (i.e. trap bags, sand cubes, big bags, etc.).
- **Sandbags used to control erosion require a permit from DEC.**

## COLLECTION, STORAGE, AND DISPOSAL

- DEC encourages you to collect sand bags for re-use to the extent it can be reasonably accomplished (given limitations of location, health of homeowners, availability of labor, etc.).
- Sandbags which have *not* come into contact with contaminated floodwater can be stored for reuse or can be debagged. The uncontaminated sand can be used as fill or aggregate in upland areas, and the bags can be stored for reuse or disposed at a municipal solid waste landfill. Placement of uncontaminated sand on the lake shoreline is acceptable, but placement in or alongside streams, tributaries, wetlands, or environmentally sensitive areas is prohibited.
- Sandbags which have contacted floodwater and are contaminated with raw sewage, industrial chemicals, petroleum products, etc. must be disposed of at a municipal solid waste landfill.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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