

What to ask your lakeshore landscape contractor

Are you considering hiring a contractor for a shoreline project? The following three questions will guide you in selecting a well-informed contractor who will help fix erosion concerns, support your recreational uses, and ensure the project will meet requirements intended to safeguard lake health and your property value.



WHAT TYPE OF DESIGNS DO YOU OFFER TO STOP EROSION?

There are three types of shorelines commonly used to address erosion concerns: riprap, bioengineered, and natural. The designs differ in the amount of rock and native vegetation used to stabilize sediments and provide protection. Natural and bioengineered designs utilize native plantings with deep root systems to stabilize sediments and minimize excessive rock placement.

In contrast, riprap shorelines utilize a large amount of rock and no vegetation, which often does not provide better erosion prevention compared to natural or bioengineered designs.



HOW DO YOUR DESIGNS ENHANCE WATER QUALITY & AQUATIC HABITATS?

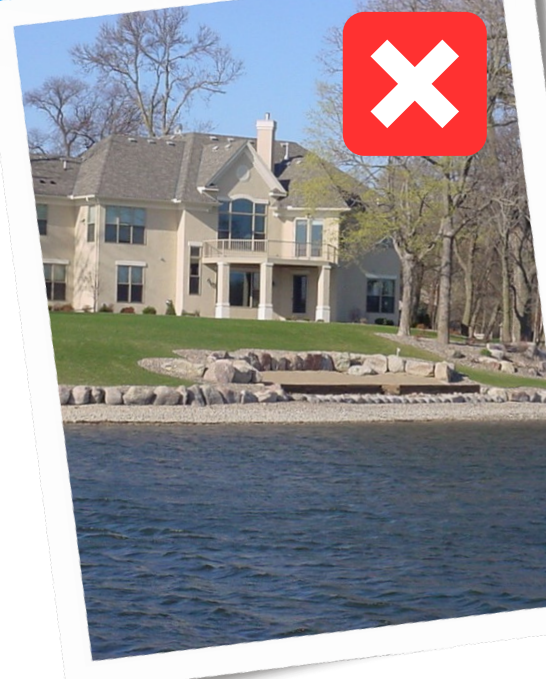
Natural or bioengineered shorelines, with their native vegetation and strategic engineering, prevent shoreline erosion and minimize and filter stormwater runoff - protecting lake water quality. They also provide essential habitat for diverse aquatic organisms that support fish populations and other desirable wildlife.

Conversely, riprap shorelines may prevent erosion, but they do little to enhance water quality or critical shoreline habitats. Shoreline designs that prioritize the removal of trees, vegetation, or excessively focus on hardscapes and beaches fail to contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and the preservation of declining wildlife populations in many of Minnesota's renowned lakes.



HOW DO YOUR DESIGNS INCORPORATE LOCAL RULES AND REGULATIONS?

The Minnesota DNR oversees the management of lakeshores below the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL). However, almost all shoreline projects include areas above the OHWL and need to follow local rules and ordinances. Before proceeding, ensure that your contractor provides documentation from the local Watershed District, Soil and Water Conservation District, or Zoning Administrator, that confirms that their proposed design does not require a permit. Exercise caution if the contractor cannot provide such proof - the responsibility for unpermitted projects and shoreline restorations ultimately lies with the landowner, not the contractor.



OTHER RESOURCES:

MN DNR SHORELAND PROGRAM

tinyurl.com/MNShoreland

MN DNR SCORE YOUR SHORE

www.dnr.state.mn.us/rys

QUESTIONS?

Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District and/or Watershed District

