

Jayne E. Smith  
Health Agent

E-mail: [jsmith@townofgb.org](mailto:jsmith@townofgb.org)  
[www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)



Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Telephone: (413) 528-0680  
Fax: (413) 528-3064

## TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# Beaver Conflict Resolution Overview

The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife has assigned local Boards of Health the responsibility of investigating nuisance beaver or muskrat complaints and issuing emergency removal permits in Massachusetts.

High waters caused by beaver activity may be infiltrating your septic system, threatening your well water, or flooding your dwelling. In these instances, it may be decided that immediate action is needed to the threat to human health and safety. This can be achieved by:

- **Beaver Removal by a licensed trapper (Conibear or Cage Traps):** Board of Health can issue a permit allowing a trapper to remove nuisance beavers. This permit is required only outside of the legal trapping season. The next legal trapping season runs from **November 1, 2015 through April 15, 2016.**
- **Breaching of Dams\* or Installation of Water Flow Device\*:** The Board of Health can permit the removal of the nuisance animals only. The Board of Health cannot give permission to breach (break up) or remove a beaver dam, as this involves wetlands regulations. In cases where the Resolution Application requests permission to breach a dam or employ water flow devices, then [Great Barrington Conservation Commission](#) will also need to approve the application.

If you are experiencing high waters caused by beaver activity on your property, **please contact the Health Department** and arrange a site visit and together determine whether the beaver activity is causing an immediate threat to human health and safety. Once a field determination has been made, it is the property owner's responsibility to complete and submit the [Beaver Conflict Resolution Application](#) for Board of Health review, and if approved, arrange for the trapper at the property owner's expense. If the nuisance beaver is not located on your own property, you must obtain permission of the owner on a [Land Owner Consent](#) Form allowing the trapper to enter the premises.