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# Most existing piers are now grandfathered

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MADISON - Most existing piers and wharves are exempt from needing state approval and can be placed in lakes and rivers the same as they've always been under a new law signed April 2, state natural resources officials say.

"Required registration of larger existing piers is eliminated," said Martye Griffin, Department of Natural Resources waterway statewide policy coordinator.

"This means that there are no size requirements to meet; no paperwork to fill out; no registration needed to grandfather your pier or wharf. If your pier was initially placed before April 2012 and doesn't block your neighbors' ability to access the water, you can repair and maintain your existing pier as is, into perpetuity."

Lawmakers in 2004 passed a law that set size standards for piers and in 2008 created a free, one-time registration system to grandfather in larger piers that did not meet the size standards. The registration deadline was extended last year, and now, the registration system is repealed under Senate Bill 326, which Gov. Scott Walker signed April 2 in Woodruff.

"Pier owners who already sent in a registration form to grandfather their pier and have not heard back yet from the DNR can place their pier in the water this spring the same as they've been doing in previous years. They will be notified shortly that their pier is good to go," Griffin says.

The new law does make some other changes to Wisconsin pier laws, but Griffin notes that they are not effective immediately. "When it's closer to the effective date of these provisions, we'll provide more information on our website and in news releases."

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Martye Griffin (608) 266-2997; Lisa Gaumnitz (608) 264-8942

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