

water ponds in Michigan aren't warm enough long enough to raise catfish as well as they can be raised in the South. Down there, catfish grow from fingerling to marketable size in one summer. In Michigan it takes three years and, therefore, isn't profitable.

Meeting State Environmental Regulations

The construction and management of ponds can cause safety and

environmental problems. Therefore, state laws regulate the following matters relating to ponds:

- Damming and diking
- Excavation and dredging within 500 feet of any surface water
- Filling of wetlands and any land within 500 feet of surface water
- Discharge of fish food and wastes into streams or lakes
- Fish stocking
- Cutting of aquatic vegetation
- Use of chemicals as aquatic herbicides (algae or weed killers), fish toxicants, or fertilizers.

There are federal regulations on the use of chemicals to control plants and fish, as well. Before undertaking any of these activities, consult the nearest office of the Department of Natural Resources on how to proceed within the law.

Various permits may be needed. Proper application for a permit may not only spare future grief but result in tips from state officials on the best ways to accomplish your objectives.