

Fence and Retaining Wall Requirements

APPLICABLE BUILDING CODE
CBC 105.2

DEFINITIONS

Fence - A fence is constructed of wood, chain link, wrought iron, decorative steel, masonry, concrete or other similar types of materials.

Retaining wall - A wall built to support or control a mass of earth or water is a retaining wall. It may be constructed of wood, masonry, concrete, metal, or other material.

Planners are available to speak with you by phone at (408) 535-3555.
Service hours are:

Monday
10:00 a.m.-Noon

This bulletin outlines the permit and construction requirements for fences and retaining walls. Codes and requirements change over time; be sure to check with the Permit Center or your Building Inspector to verify requirements.

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The requirements vary according to the type of property:

- **Multi-Family and Non-Residential properties** - Constructing a fence or retaining wall requires a building permit and plan review.
- **Single Family/Duplex properties** - For fences, a building permit is required if the fence height will exceed the limitations described below. The applicant must submit a plan for review and approval in order to obtain the permit. For retaining walls, a building permit is not required IF the wall does not support a surcharge and measures 4 feet or less, as measured from bottom of the footing.

All fences and retaining walls on all types of property must comply with the City's zoning regulations. Call the Permit Center and ask to speak with a planner if you have questions.

SINGLE FAMILY/DUPLEX PROPERTIES - FENCE HEIGHT LIMITATIONS

Fences for single family and duplex properties are limited to specific heights as follows:

Maximum Allowable Height

- Front yard - 3 feet
- Side yard - 7 feet
- Rear yard - 7 feet

CORNER LOTS, IRREGULAR LOTS, AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ZONES