

## FENCES ON RESIDENTIAL LOTS



DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY PLANNING  
AND BUILDING

### FENCES 101

**Check with planning staff** before you start to build your retaining wall or fence. In most cases you do not need a permit, but may require an engineer's sign-off if you have a retaining wall taller than 1.2 metres.

**Call before you dig.** The easiest way to find out what is buried on your property is to call BC One Call at 1-800-474-6886 or go to [bc1c.ca](http://bc1c.ca)

**Two factors to consider** when building a fence and/or retaining wall are height and location, both of which are regulated in *Zoning and Development Bylaw, 1994, No. 2000*. If your plan for a fence is taller than zoning regulations permit, you must apply for a development variance permit.

**Fence height is measured** from the ground adjacent the fence or retaining wall to the highest point of the fence posts. If the ground level is lower on one side of the fence, measure from the lower side.

### FENCE HEIGHTS FOR SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS AND DUPLEXES

Each property contains *setbacks*, which are areas that must remain free of buildings or structures. However, fences may be built within setback areas, but have lower maximum heights than fences built outside the setback areas or toward the interior of the property.

For properties containing a single-family dwelling or duplex:

- If a fence is built within 4.5 metres of the front lot line, the maximum height of that portion of fence is 1.2 metres;
- If a fence is built within 0.6 metres of an interior side lot line, the maximum height for that portion of fence is 2 metres;

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- If a fence is built on or within 1.2 metres of the rear lot line, the maximum height of that portion of fence is 2 metres;
- If the lot is on a corner with two street frontages, the owner may choose which side will be considered the front lot line (1.2 metre maximum height) or side lot line (2 metre maximum height).

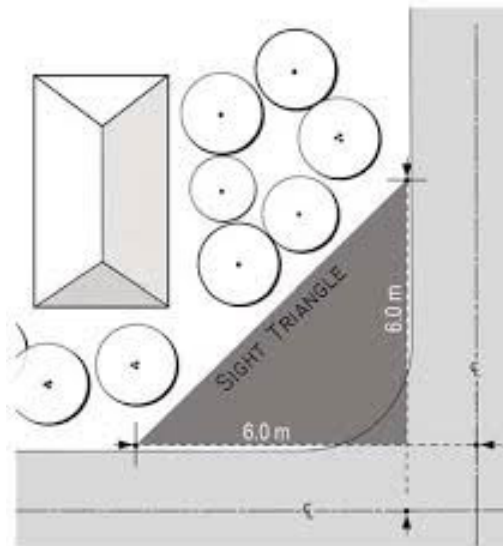
### RETAINING WALLS

Where a fence is built atop a retaining wall or within the same setback area, the combined maximum height from the bottom of the retaining wall to the top of the fence is 2 metres.

The maximum height of a retaining wall within a setback area is 1 metre. Should you require a taller retaining wall, you must apply for a development variance permit and possibly a building permit.

### SIGHT TRIANGLE

If your property is on a corner with two street frontages, you must keep the corner area free from visual obstructions. If any fence or retaining wall is constructed in the sight triangle (see below), the maximum height of that portion of fence or retaining wall is 0.5 metres.



**Different regulations apply to fences on commercial, industrial, multi-family or other properties. See the current zoning bylaw for details.**

### Photo Captions

Cover photo: Public domain. Pine plank fence. Ukraine.

Inner photo: Corner lot restrictions. *The City of Cold Lake Land Use Bylaw 382-LU-10* (Consolidated June 2013) .

*Information is for convenience only. Contact department staff to discuss current and applicable bylaws*



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