



Planning & Economic Development

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FENCES IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

PERMITS

Any fence that exceeds seven feet in height requires a building permit and shall conform to the International Building Code, as adopted and amended by the City of Poulsbo.

However, zoning and engineering may need to review the project, depending on where the fence will be located on your lot.

LOCATION

- Generally, your fence may be located anywhere on your property. However, if your property contains a critical area – such as a wetland, stream, or steep slope – or is within the Shoreline Jurisdiction, limitations on fence location may apply. In such cases, contact the Planning and Economic Development (PED) Department for assistance.
- No fence shall be located in any public right-of-way, unless a right-of-way use permit is obtained from the City.
- A sight distance triangle is required at the intersection of two streets and is to remain unobstructed to ensure pedestrian and vehicle safety. These standards are housed in the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials “Green Book.” Contact the Engineering and Building Department for more information.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE HEIGHT?

- Height is measured from finished grade at the exterior side of the fence.
- Fences located on retaining walls are measured from the finished grade at the top of the retaining wall to the top of the fence.

- No person may construct a berm upon which to build a fence unless the total height of the berm plus the fence does not exceed the maximum height allowable for the fence if the berm was not present.

PROPERTY LINES

It is the property owner’s responsibility to determine property lines prior to installing a fence. The City of Poulsbo does not maintain information about property lines.

PROHIBITED FENCES

Prohibited fence types include barbed or razor wire and electric fencing; provided, that electric fencing may be used for livestock containment as allowed in [PMC 18.70.070 P](#).

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Homeowners should check their association documents prior to installing fencing. Association rules may be more restrictive than the City Code regulations described in this handout

FRIENDLY FENCES

The City of Poulsbo recommends that your front yard fence be no more than 3 feet 6 inches high. This makes our neighborhoods friendly and safe, and reduces crime by increasing visibility and reducing “hiding places.”

CONTRACTOR

If you hire someone to build your fence, they must be a registered contractor—it’s the law in Washington State. To verify your contractor’s information, contact the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (phone: (360)415-4000; website: www.LNI.wa.gov).

Disclaimer: this handout should not be used as a substitute for codes and regulations. The applicant/property owner is responsible for compliance with all code and rule requirements, whether or not described here. Please see the City of Poulsbo Municipal Code for complete text and requirements.

