



Retaining Wall Permit Requirements

RETAINING WALLS LESS THAN 48 INCHES IN HEIGHT DO NOT REQUIRE A PERMIT BUT MUST MEET ANY ZONING REGULATIONS OR SETBACK REQUIREMENTS. STEPPED RETAINING WALLS WITH A TOTAL HEIGHT GREATER THAN 48" REQUIRE A PERMIT.

The following information must be submitted to the Community Development Department before a building permit can be processed and approved. A more detailed description of items 1-4 is listed.

- 1. Building Permit Application form.**
- 2. Survey or Site Plan [one copy].**
- 3. Building Plans [two copies] prepared or approved by a MN Licensed Engineer.**
- 4. Miscellaneous as required.**

1. Building Permit Application:

Complete and sign a building permit application form. The forms are available at the Community Development Department or online at www.ci.columbia-heights.mn.us/city_services/building_permits.asp A plan review by the City Planner, the City Engineer, and the Building Official is required prior to issuance of the permit. You will be called when the permit is ready to be picked up.

2. Survey or Site Plan:

Provide an updated plan of the property showing all property lines, existing buildings [with dimensions] and project address or PIN number. Diagram the proposed retaining wall location, dimensions and proposed setbacks from property lines, existing buildings and all topographical features. A registered survey may be required if lot irons cannot be located to verify setbacks.

3. Building Plans [two sets] and information sheet:

Prior to beginning work for the retaining wall, a building permit application must be completed and submitted to the Building Official along with two sets of construction drawings and the site plan. The construction drawings must show

- Proposed elevations of the finished yard grade
- Proposed grading for surface water drainage
- Construction materials
- Height of wall and setback
- Base and backfill materials
- Drain Tile installation
- Number of courses below finished grade
- Slope above wall

The plans must be prepared or approved by a MN Licensed Engineer

4. **Miscellaneous:**

Permit Fees: Building Permit fees will be determined based on the valuation of the work. Plan Review Fees are based on a percentage of the Building Permit fees. Fees must be paid in full before a permit can be issued or work can begin.

Stamped, Approved, Construction Plan and Site Plan: You will receive one set of plans back from the city staff that must be kept on the job site until the final inspection has been conducted.

Building Inspection Card: Must be posted on the construction site, preferably inside the front storm door for easy access by the Building Inspector.

Locate Property Corner Irons (legal markers) - Irons must be visible when final inspection is requested.

Inspections: Call (763) 706-3678 between 8:00 AM and 4:45 PM Monday through Friday to schedule the inspections needed for your project. Please allow 2 to 3 days for scheduling. Final inspection of walls designed by an engineer will require an affidavit from the engineer verifying the wall was constructed in accordance with the design.

CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

1. **Workmanship-** constructed in a substantial and workmanlike manner to withstand conditions of soil, weather and use, and of substantial material reasonably suited to the purpose for which the freestanding wall or retaining wall is proposed to be used.
2. **Materials-** No previously used materials such as old barn boards may be used.
3. **Stabilizing Steep Slopes/Preventing Erosion-** retaining walls and cribbing shall be used.
4. **Design-** In accordance with sound engineering practice including, but not limited to, a minimum of four (4) inch concrete footing of appropriate width and drains of appropriate type, size and spacing.
5. **Cribbed Slopes-** shall be appropriately planted if open-faced cribbing is used.
6. **Finished Look-** must be constructed with finished side to adjoining property where applicable.
7. **Terraced Walls-** each span of terraced wall or fence will be added to the height of the lowest span of wall to the extent that it exceeds the said lowest span for purposes of determining the height of a wall under this chapter and the said total of those measurements shall be considered as the height of a single wall hereunder.