

Fences, Walls, and Hedges



Building Inspections

The Minnesota State Building Code and Richfield City Code provide minimum standards for creating an environment of health and safety for all Richfield residents.

The Richfield City Code has general provisions about fences, walls and hedges in residential areas:

Definitions:

“Hedge” – A row of shrubbery which forms or is intended to form a barrier.

“Wall” – This term includes retaining walls, freestanding walls, and decorative or privacy walls.

Where can I place a fence on my lot?

- ◆ **Your property line is typically 12 – 14 feet behind the curb. Fences may be constructed on private property up to, but not on, the property line. (Your side of the property line).** If, however, the fence will be located along a public right of way containing a street, alley, or sidewalk, it may be placed on private property at a location at least three feet from the nearest edge of the street, alley or sidewalk.
- ◆ **Fences** are not encouraged on City property and **may not be placed in the right-of-way without first obtaining a permit from the City of Richfield Engineering Division** (612-861-9793).

Height:

- ◆ Fence height is measured to include the body of the fence, plus allowing a maximum of six inches (on average between posts) above the natural grade (i.e. for drainage purposes). Fence posts are permitted to extend a maximum of six inches above the body of the fence.
- ◆ No fence, wall, or hedge more than four feet in height shall be constructed or permitted to grow forward of the front line of the principal building extended to the side lot lines;
- ◆ No fence or wall more than six feet in height shall be constructed elsewhere on the lot except that in “C-2” and “I” districts, the maximum height shall be eight feet. A building permit shall be required for fences and walls over seven feet in height; and
- ◆ Whenever a fence or wall is used in combination, or placed upon a berm, the combined height shall not exceed the permitted heights outlined in the above paragraphs.

This handout is written as a guide to common questions and problems.
It is not intended nor shall it be considered a complete set of requirements.

Prohibitions:

- ◆ Barbed wire and electric wire fences are prohibited in all districts. Fences shall not be constructed from chicken wire, welded wire, branches, or materials originally intended for other purposes, unless a showing of a high degree of architectural quality is achieved through the use of such, and prior approvals granted by the Director.

Chain link:

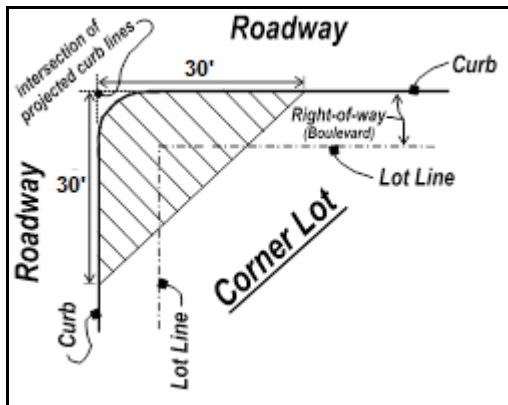
- ◆ Chain link fences shall have a top rail and the barbed ends shall be toward the ground. Inserts or slats, which are woven through such fences, shall be kept in a good state of repair.

Posts:

- ◆ Posts and stringers on any fence located on or near the lot line shall be on the inside of the fenced area unless designed as an integral part of the fence. Posts for wooden fences shall be spaced at intervals not to exceed eight feet. Posts for chain link fences shall be spaced at intervals not to exceed ten feet. (Amended, Bill No. 1999-3).

Corner lots:

- ◆ Fences, walls and hedges located on any corner lot are subject to traffic visibility regulations. No fence, wall, or hedge greater than 30 inches in height (above the abutting curblines of the intersecting streets) shall be placed in the "sight triangle" area, as shown on the diagram below.



Construction and maintenance:

- ◆ All fences and walls shall be constructed of durable, weather resistant materials which are properly anchored. All fences and walls shall be maintained in a condition of reasonable repair and shall not be allowed to become and remain in a condition of disrepair, danger, or constitute a nuisance.
- ◆ A permit is not required for fences, walls, or hedges less than 7 feet in height, but they must meet all of these guidelines.
- ◆ Call Gopher State One Call prior to digging postholes – (651) 454-0002.

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