

Fence Information

**Handout No. 7-9
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1. Multifamily and Commercial/Industrial -

- All fencing located on a Multi-Family or Commercial/Industrial project must comply with the City of San Jose Zoning Regulations. These requirements may be obtained through the Planning Division at (408) 535-3555 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

2. Single Family -

• **Zoning Requirements**

Fences for Single Family Dwellings are limited to specific heights as regulated in the San Jose Zoning Ordinance. **Fence heights are as follows :**

- * Front yard three feet maximum height
- * Side yards seven feet maximum height
- * Rear yard seven feet maximum height

Exception

Fence heights for **corner lots, unusually shaped lots and Planned Development (PD) zones** have different requirements than those stated above. Contact the Planning Department at (408) 535-3555 for requirements. Generally on corner lots, the side and rear yard fence along the street may be 3 feet high along the property line and may be 7 feet high if held back 5 feet from property line. If the rear property line abuts the side property line of the lot to the rear, side and rear fence heights must be lowered to provide sightlines to the street from any driveway to the rear (contact the Planning Department for details).

For determining fence heights, the front yard extends from the front of the house to the front property line. The side yard extends from the front of the house along the side of the house to the rear yard. The rear yard extends from the rear of the house to, and across, the rear property line.

• **Permit Requirements**

Fence - A fence is constructed of wood, chain link, wrought iron, decorative steel, masonry, concrete and other similar type materials. A Building Permit is not required for fences six feet or less in height.

Note: Fence height regulations are in effect even if a permit is not required.

Retaining wall - A wall built to support or prevent the advance of a mass of earth or water is a retaining wall and may be constructed of wood, masonry, concrete, metal, and other products. A building permit is not required for a retaining wall, which does not support a surcharge and measures less than 4' 0" in height measured from bottom of the footing.

• **Plan Requirements**

When a permit is required for the installation of a fence or retaining wall, the applicant must submit plans for plan check, which must be reviewed and approved prior to obtaining a building permit.

A pictorial handout entitled "*Fence Regulations*", which depicts fence height and location requirements as regulated by the Zoning Ordinance is available at the Building Department customer service counter.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting our website at www.sanjoseca.gov/building/ or by calling our Information Inspector's voice mail at (408) 535-3555 and leaving a detailed message. In addition you may visit the Building Division in City Hall at 200 East Santa Clara St. Our hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with limited service between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.