

RETAINING WALLS

- This handout is intended only as a guide. It shall not be considered a complete set of requirements.
- Materials and installation must comply with the current Minnesota State Building Code and the manufacturer's or engineer's installation specifications for each product.
- A building permit is required for a retaining wall when any portion of the wall being built exceeds 4' in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall.
- A building permit is also required if the wall will support a surcharge (a vertical load on the retained soil possibly adding lateral pressure in addition to the soil) regardless of the height of the wall.
- Walls taller than 48" that are not laterally supported at the top, or walls taller than 24" that retain lateral loads in addition to soils shall require an engineered design in accordance with Sections R301.1.3 and R404.4 of the current Minnesota Residential Code.
- Whether or not your project requires a building permit based on the above guidelines, **check with your municipality and/or Watershed District to determine whether it requires a zoning permit, and for any additional restrictions or requirements.**
- Walls shall be designed with a 1.5 safety factor against lateral sliding and overturning.

BUILDING Permit Submittal (if required) shall include:

- Building Permit Application**, completed in its entirety, including signature and valuation.
- A site plan (or Certificate of Survey** if required by municipality) drawn to scale and dimensioned, identifying proposed wall with measurements from the adjacent lot lines; as well as all lot lines, setbacks, easements, adjacent street names, and all structures on the property. **Check with your municipality to determine setback requirements of your specific property.**
- One set of plans** (drawn to scale) showing the proposed layout and design, and including:
 - Dimensions
 - Materials
 - Where the construction materials will be located
 - Engineer's report or plans signed by a Minnesota licensed professional engineer.
- Additional information may be required by the plan reviewer

PERMIT CARD AND APPROVED PLANS (throughout the project) shall be:

POSTED prior to start of work - **VISIBLE** from street or driveway - **ACCESSIBLE** to the inspector.

INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS:

Inspections **MUST** be scheduled during office hours **AT LEAST** one business day prior to inspection. If a specific date and time is required, additional notice may be needed. Failure to cancel a scheduled inspection may result in a reinspection fee.

- **Office Hours:** Monday - Friday • 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- **Phone:** (952) 442-7520 or (888) 446-1801

Inspections: (Refer to your permit card regarding project-specific inspections. Depending on the size of the project, periodic inspections may be required as well.)

- **Footings/Drain Tile:** After footing base and/or drainage system is in place.
- **Geo-Grid Installation:** When first layer of geo-grid is installed and exposed. (Your project may require inspections of additional layers – see your permit card.)
- **Final:** When retaining wall is complete and all prior required inspections have been completed.

NOTICE: Construction or work for which a permit is required shall be subject to inspection by the Building Official, and such **construction or work shall remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes until approved.** It is the responsibility of the permit applicant to be in attendance on site and provide access to the Building Official for all required inspections. If work is concealed and/or work is not complete at time of inspection, an additional inspection is required and a **reinspection fee may apply.**

Note: The State of Minnesota requires all residential building contractors, remodelers, roofers, plumbers, and electricians to obtain a state license, unless they qualify for a specific exemption. Any person claiming an exemption must provide a copy of a Certificate of Exemption from the Department of Labor & Industry to the Municipality before a permit will be issued.

Note: To determine contractor requirements, or to check the licensing status of a contractor, please call the Minnesota Department of Labor & Industry at 651-284-5065 or toll free 1-800-342-5354.

Note: For specific code requirements, contact the Building Inspection Department at 952-442-7520 or 888-446-1801 or e-mail: infoMN@safebuilt.com.