

# RETAINING WALL

City of Brookfield, Wisconsin  
Inspection Services Department  
2000 North Calhoun Rd, Brookfield, WI 53005

Phone 262-796-6646 M-F, 7am - 5pm  
FAX (262) 796-6702

## HERE IS A LIST OF THE MOST OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING RETAINING WALLS

**Q: Do I need a building permit?**

A: A building permit is **not** required for the following two types of retaining walls:

- (1) Edgings less than 6" in height of metal, stone, brick, concrete or timber or other materials around driveways, patios, gardens, flower beds, plantings of trees.
- (2) Decorative walls not higher than 18" in height and located at least 5' from the lot line used around gardens, plantings, trees, patios or driveways and constructed of natural stone, brick or timbers.

**All other retaining walls do require a building permit.**

**Q. How much will a permit cost?**

A. \$71.00 with a *nonrefundable* plan review fee of \$40.00 due at application.

**Q. How do I get a permit?**

A. Please submit:

1. 2 copies of a **PLAN** for the retaining wall which should include a cross section of the wall showing method of construction, an elevation and landscape plan.
2. 5 copies of a current **SURVEY** showing location of the wall, distances from lot lines and drainage provisions. If the wall is at least 5' off the property line you may use an older survey. A hold harmless agreement must be signed in order to use a survey over one year old.
3. A completed building permit application.

**Q. Where can the retaining wall be located?**

- A. The Director can issue a permit for a retaining wall which is not more than 5' in height and at least 1' from a property line and is not constructed in a drainage way and is of structurally sound materials.

**Q. How long does it take to get my permit?**

- A. This varies. A retaining wall which is more than 5' in height or is closer than 1' to the lot line requires Plan Commission (or its designee) approval for appearance, materials and location. If an appearance before the Plan Commission (or its designee) is necessary, an application letter requesting approval of the retaining wall must be submitted. You will be contacted by City staff for scheduling if this is necessary. Please ask about time for review process at the time you make your permit application submittal.

**Q. Must I have the lot line identified?**

- A. Yes. The corners shall be located with intermediate stakes or a reference line from corner to corner. This line must remain in place during construction and final inspection.

**NOTE:** The property owner is responsible for correct placement of structures upon a parcel of land to comply with the building and zoning law. The edge of the City street pavement or back of curb is usually **NOT** located on a property line.

Good luck with your project! Remember we are here to serve and protect you, our residents.

Our hours are Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Field Inspectors are in from 7:00-8:00 a.m. and 2:30-3:30 p.m. Our telephone number is **(262) 796-6646**. Please call if we may be of further assistance.

**PLEASE CALL DIGGER'S HOTLINE AT LEAST 3 DAYS PRIOR TO STARTING YOUR PROJECT. (800)242-8511 OR (800) 542-2289**