



**DO YOUR HOMEWORK:**  
**Tips on Planning a Successful  
 Home Construction Project**

1. Get written detailed bids from three contractors. Compare the bids and ask questions. Don't assume that the lowest bid is the best deal.
2. Verify that the contractor's license is active and check the complaint history at **hirealicensedcontractor.com** or call 503-378-4621.
3. Ask for, and check references. Look at other jobs the contractor has completed recently.
4. Verify who will be responsible for securing the necessary permits.
5. Agree in advance to a payment schedule, don't pay for everything up front.

**ABOUT US**

The Community Development Department is responsible for economic development, land use planning, zoning administration, building inspection, and historic preservation. The Department provides staff support to the Planning Commission (APC), the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC), the Design Review Committee (DRC), and the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSC).

The Department administers both the City Comprehensive Plan and the Development Code. The Department also administers the City's Building Inspection Program.

For further information please visit our website at **www.astoria.or.us**.

**HOW TO CONTACT US**

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CITY OF ASTORIA  
 Founded 1811 • Incorporated 1856

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**Does My Fence  
 Meet Code  
 Requirements?**

**www.astoria.or.us**

# KEY INFORMATION REGARDING CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR FENCES

## WHAT IS A FENCE?

A “fence” is defined as “an accessory structure, including landscape planting, designed and intended to serve as a barrier or as a means of enclosing a yard or other area, or other structure; or to serve as a boundary feature separating two or more properties.” A tree is not considered a fence or a hedge.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Location:** Fences may be located on the property lines. However, no portion of the fence, including footings, may extend beyond the property line.
- **Encroachments:** Fences cannot encroach onto adjacent properties, into a right-of-way, or into Vision Clearance Areas at street and driveway intersections. Approval may be obtained for construction of a fence within the right-of-way through a permit from the Engineering Division at **503-338-5173**.
- **Height Calculation:** Fence height is calculated from the grade level on the fence owner’s property to the highest portion of the fence including any lattice or other ornamental treatments above the regular fence. Fence posts and light fixtures on fence posts may exceed the maximum fence height. An arbor style entry gateway may exceed the maximum height. For fences atop a retaining wall, check with the Planner or Building Inspector for height calculation.
- **Historic:** Fences on historic properties do not require review by the Historic Landmarks Commission.
- **Private Regulations:** Property owners are advised to check any applicable private regulations, such as subdivision Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs). Private CC&Rs are not enforced by the City.
- **Retaining Walls:** See the “Retaining Wall Permit” brochure.
- **Materials:** Wood, wire, vinyl, and vegetative landscape fences are allowed in the City, subject to the requirements of the Development Code for any special restrictions with a particular zone.
- **Barbed Wire Fence:** No person may construct or maintain a barbed wire fence or allow barbed wire to remain as part of a fence along a sidewalk or public way, unless the wire is placed not less than 6 inches above the top of a fence that is not less than 6 feet high. (*Astoria City Code 5.630*)
- **Electric Fence:** No person may install, maintain, or operate an electric fence along a street or sidewalk, or along the adjoining property line of another person. (*Astoria City Code 5.630*)
- **Razor Barbed Wire:** Use of concertina or razor style barbed wire is prohibited. (*Astoria City Code 5.630*)

- **Utilities:** Before you begin digging, call for a utility locate at **1-800-332-2344**.

## FENCES IN RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL ZONES

**Fences in residential zones (R-1, R-2, R-3)** must comply with certain regulations found in the Astoria Development Code and City Code. To verify zoning on a particular property, contact the Planning Division at **503- 338-5183** or check on the web at **www.astoria.or.us**.

An “interior lot” has frontage on only one street, with other lots on both sides and in the rear. Interior lots have one front yard setback, two (or more) side yard setbacks, and one rear yard setback. Fences on interior lots must comply with the maximum height restrictions, as shown on the diagram.

A “corner lot” has frontage on two streets which intersect. Corner lots have one front yard setback, one street side yard setback, one interior side yard setback, and one rear yard setback. Fences on corner lots are limited to a 4 foot high fence in the front and street side yard setbacks. Fences on corner lots must comply with the Vision Clearance Area for traffic safety, as shown on the diagram.

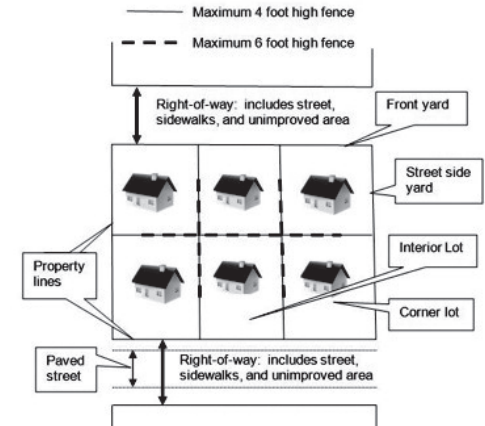
- In the front yard setback, measured from the front property line, which includes the first 20 feet of the side yards, fences cannot be higher than 4 feet.
- In the street side setback of a corner lot, measured from the front property line, fences cannot be higher than 4 feet.
- In the side and rear yard setbacks, fences cannot be higher than 6 feet.
- Fences that are located back from the required setback area may be higher as approved by the Planning and Building Divisions.
- No permit is required prior to construction of a new fence that meets the code requirements. Any fence over 6 feet tall would require a building permit. Depending on the type of footing for the fence, a Grading and Erosion Control Permit may be required.

**Fences in non-residential zones** must comply with certain regulations found in the Astoria Development Code and City Code. To verify zoning on a particular property, contact the Planning Division at **503- 338-5183** or visit **www.astoria.or.us**.

- Fences higher than 6 feet may be permitted if approved by the Planning Division, but must have an approved Building Permit.
- No permit is required prior to construction of a new fence that meets the Code requirements and is 6 feet tall or less. Any fence over 6 feet tall would require a building permit.

Depending on the type of footing for the fence, a Grading and Erosion Control Permit may be required.

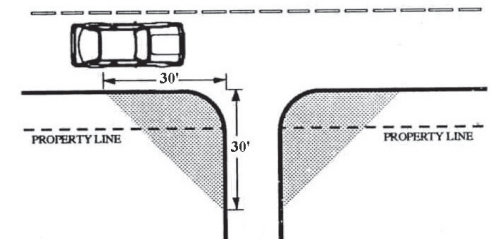
### Residential Zone Fence Height



## VISION CLEARANCE AREA

The Vision Clearance Area is measured along each street, from the corner of the intersection of the two street rights-of-way as measured along the outside edge of the sidewalk/curb. In a residential zone, the distance is 30 feet; in a non-residential zone it is 15 feet. Nothing may be located between 2.5 feet high and 8 feet high within this area.

### Vision Clearance Area



### Vision Clearance Area Height

