



Retaining Walls

What is a Retaining Wall?

The RDCO's Building Bylaw No. 1482 defines a **retaining wall** as a structure that holds or retains soil or other material behind it.

How Tall Can a Retaining Wall Be?

The RDCO's land use bylaws limit the height of a **retaining wall** to a maximum of 2.5m.

Retaining walls **less than 1.5m** high are considered landscaping walls and **do not** require a building permit. However, walls that **exceed 1.5m** high are considered structures which **require engineering reports and a building permit**.

Where site constraints may necessitate retaining walls that exceed 2.5m, a Development Variance Permit may be considered. Please refer to the Development Variance Permit bulletin for more information at rdco.com/planning.

Where Can Retaining Walls be Located?

A **retaining wall** under 1.5m high can be built within any required setbacks of the parcel, provided that they do not extend beyond the parcel boundary.

Retaining walls that exceed 1.5m can be located within a side or rear setback. However, if they are over 2m high they must be sited at least 1m from the side or rear parcel line.

If a **retaining wall** is located within a front setback or less than 4.5m from a property line fronting a provincial public highway, it may require a permit from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

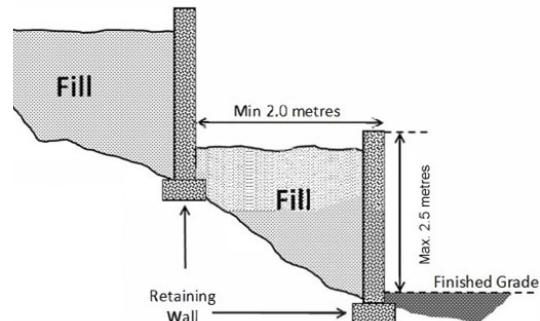
Building Bylaw Regulations

No person may construct or structurally repair, a **retaining wall** without a building permit if:

- any part of it is greater than 1.5m in height as measured from the bottom of the foundation to the top of the retaining structure;
- It is located in a riparian or floodplain area; or
- It supports a road or lane.

Additional Regulations

- Retaining walls (including landscaping walls) shall not be closer than 2.0m apart.
- If Retaining walls are less than 2.0m apart, the wall height measurement will be the sum of each wall height.**
- The maximum height of a fence located on top of a retaining wall is 1.3m.



Additional Information

- Retaining walls within the Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw area are only subject to Building Bylaw No. 1482 regulations.
- If a Building Official determines that an unsafe condition exists as a result of the construction of a **retaining wall**, a building permit for a guard or fence may be required.

This bulletin is for informational purposes only. Please refer to the relevant bylaws for more information.



Retaining Wall Applications

What do I need for a Retaining Wall Permit Application?

- Completed Application Form with Fees
- Owner's Authorization (Signed by owners on title)
- Land Title Search (Within 6 months of application)
- Drawing Set (Preferred Size: 11 x 17 + digital copies)
- Site Plan
- Retaining Wall Plans (Including material and height)
- Engineering drawings if wall is greater than 1.5m (Schedule B)
- Geotechnical Report (if applicable)

What do I need to include on a Retaining Wall Site Plan?

- Pre-existing, current, and proposed finished grades
- Area of construction clearly indicated
- Easements and Right of Ways that may be impacted by the development
- Legal description of the property with north arrow and lot dimensions
- Existing & proposed structures and their specific uses
- Retaining Wall spacing, material, and height
- Zoning setbacks (from property lines and buildings)
- Cross sections of Retaining Wall (if requested)

