

Building a Fence

Is A Permit Required?

Yes. Before you put up your fence, you must obtain a fence permit. A permit application is available at the city website, or at city hall. Here's what you will need:

- A survey or site plan showing the proposed location of your fence
- Plans that show the design of your fence
- \$15 for the permit.

Where can the fence be located?

Nothing is more important than location when building a fence. An improperly located fence can result in friction between neighbors, ordinance violations, lawsuits or even the need to move your fence. To avoid these costly and frustrating problems, your fence must be located entirely inside your property line. It cannot be on the property line, a neighbor's land or public property (boulevards, sidewalk area, etc.). It is your responsibility to know where your property line is, so make sure you have located the corner stakes before you install the fence. For tips on finding the property line, see the "Locating a Property Line" handout.

How High A Fence Can I Build?

The maximum allowed fence height is affected by your lot's location, where the fence is located on your lot, and by visibility triangles (refer to illustration on page 2).

Interior lots (neighbors on both sides). Fences on interior lots can be no more than six feet high in the side or rear yard. Front yard fences cannot be more than 48 inches high.

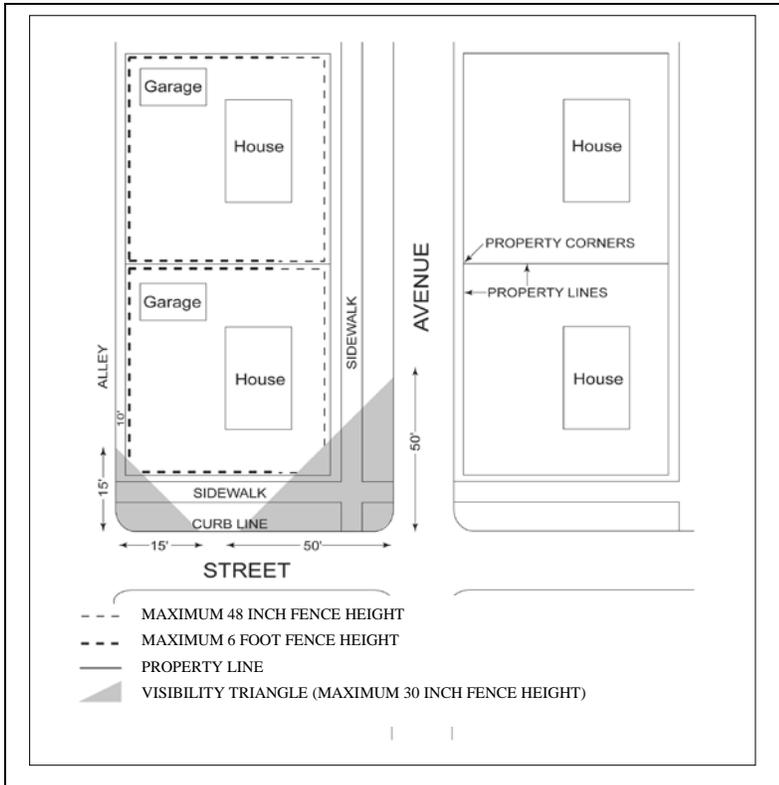
Corner lots. Fences on corner lots have lower allowable heights at the corner of two streets, a street and an alley, and at the intersection of two alleys. A visibility triangle is required at these intersections to maintain visibility of oncoming cars and pedestrians. The fence height in a corner lot's visibility triangle cannot exceed 30 inches.

Planning Dept. 952-924-2575

www.stlouispark.org

5005 Minnetonka Blvd

Determining what is the front yard on a corner lot takes special care because the front yard is not always where the home's front door is located. On a corner lot, the front yard is the yard with the shortest dimension against the public right-of-way (the yard with the shortest curb length). Corner lot owners should check with the Assistant Zoning Administrator for help in determining visibility triangles and front yard location.



Can a Fence Be Taller Than Six Feet?

There are some specific situations where fences can be taller than six feet. Fences along property lines that are adjacent to state highways, schools, churches, synagogues, railroads, and commercial or industrial property may be as tall as eight feet. Any fence over six feet in height must be approved by an engineer to meet state building code requirements. You must also fill out a building permit instead of the fence permit application. Check with the Planning Dept. to see if your lot qualifies. Call the Inspections Dept. (952-924-2588) for questions about the State Building Code.

What Materials Can I Use?

Fences must be constructed of durable materials such as wood, rigid vinyl, or chain link. Every fence must be constructed so the finished side of the fence faces your neighbors' property. The structural side of your fence must face your property. (Alternating board fences, which are finished on both sides, are acceptable.) If the posts and/or 2x4s are visible on one side only, then they are considered to be structural, and must be on your side of the fence.

Pool Fences

A fence surrounding a swimming pool must be constructed to keep children from entering the pool enclosure. Pool fences and gates must be at least four feet high. There can be no openings greater than four inches either through or under the fence or gate. Pool fences must be constructed without handholds or footholds. Gates must be self-closing and self-catching. Call Inspections (952-924-2588) with questions about pool fences.

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Locating a Property Line

The information below is intended to assist you in locating your property lines. All information is general in nature and should not be considered as legal advice or as a substitute for a survey.

City staff cannot come to your house to locate your property line or take sides in a dispute over a private property line. A property line dispute is a legal issue between property owners and is not regulated by City Ordinances.

Contact a Registered Land Surveyor for professional service in locating your property line and/or an Attorney for legal advice regarding your rights as a property owner.

Can I locate my property line without hiring a Registered Land Surveyor?

Yes. You can rent a metal detector from a rental facility or hardware store.

What is a survey stake?

When land is surveyed, metal stakes, also known as “irons” or “monuments”, marks the corners of the lot. These markers are typically a hollow, metal pipe, approximately 1/2 inch in diameter and 1.5 feet long. Newer stakes may have plastic caps on top or have the tip painted with a bright color.

Where are they located?

Survey stakes are located at the corners of your property. Most are buried a few inches deep; however, after many years, the stakes may become buried deeper or may have been accidentally removed due to landscaping and grade changes. Survey stakes located in the front yard, or side yard abutting a street will be located approximately 10-14 feet from the curb. Survey stakes located along alleys are typically within one foot of the edge of the alley. Renting a metal detector can be helpful in locating the stakes.

What if I cannot find my survey stake?

It may have been removed, buried beneath retaining walls, paved driveways, hedges, etc. If you cannot find the survey stake, then the only alternative is to hire a registered land surveyor to locate your property line and set a new survey stake. Only a registered land surveyor can do this.

How do I get my lot surveyed?

A typical residential lot survey costs approximately \$700 to \$900. It can be more if your land is irregular in shape or has other unusual features. Surveying is a competitive business and you should obtain estimates from several sources. Look in the Yellow Pages under “Surveyors-Land.” While it may seem expensive to hire a surveyor, it may be cheaper than relocating improvements or legal costs caused by encroaching on someone else’s property.

Planning Dept. 952-924-2575

Zoning Permit Application

Application to Construct a Fence

ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED

\$15.00

Address:

Property Owner:

Name _____

Address _____
Number and Street Name City State Zip

Phone: (____) _____ Cell: (____) _____ FAX: (____) _____

Contractor Installing Fence (if applicable):

Name _____

Address _____
Number and Street Name City State Zip

Phone: (____) _____ Cell: (____) _____ FAX: (____) _____

Location and Height of Fence:

Front Yard-Height _____ (maximum 48 inches)

Side Yard-Height _____ (maximum 6 feet)

Rear Yard-Height _____ (maximum 6 feet)

Type of Fence:

Chain-Link Fence

Wood Privacy Fence

Picket Fence

Other _____

Additional Information Required:

- Site Plan showing the location of all buildings and existing and proposed fences. A property survey is preferred; however a sketch plan of the property is acceptable. Please use a ruler and show dimensions.
- Fence design indicating height, style and number of finished sides.

NOTE: The finished side of the fence must face neighboring properties. Structural elements such as posts and 2x4s must be on the fence owner's side. The city will require the fence to be re-built if the structural elements are on the neighbor's or street/alley side.

The permit applicant acknowledges that it is their responsibility to ensure that the fence is constructed entirely on the property for which this permit is issued and the fence is properly anchored.

Permits issued and inspections made by the City are a public service and do not constitute any representation, guarantee or warranty, either implied or expressed, to any person as to the conformance to applicable City codes. The undersigned acknowledges that this application has been read and that the above is correct and agrees to comply with all the ordinances and laws of the City of St. Louis Park regulating fence construction.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

For Office Use Only

Permit # _____ Fee _____ App/Date _____ Issued _____