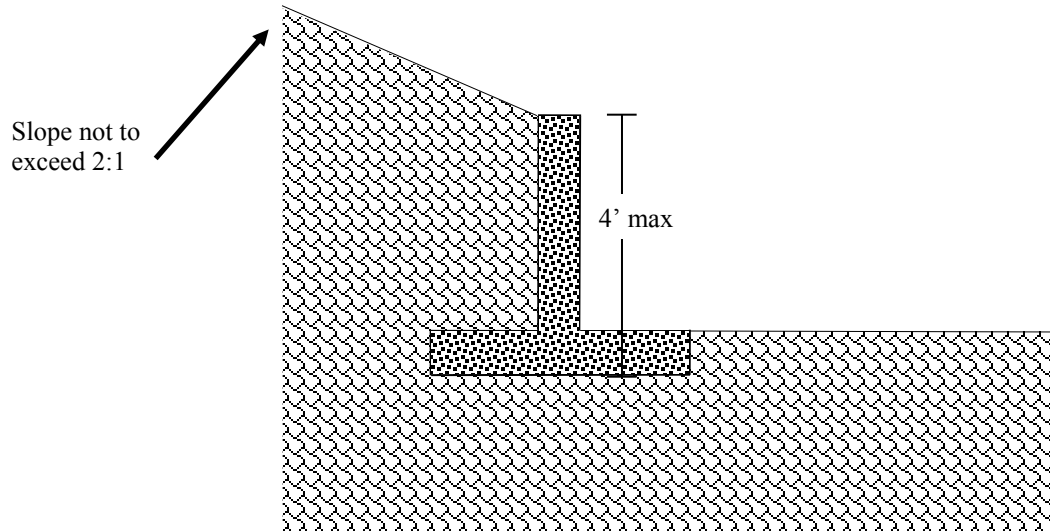




Building Division Determination on Retaining Walls with Fences

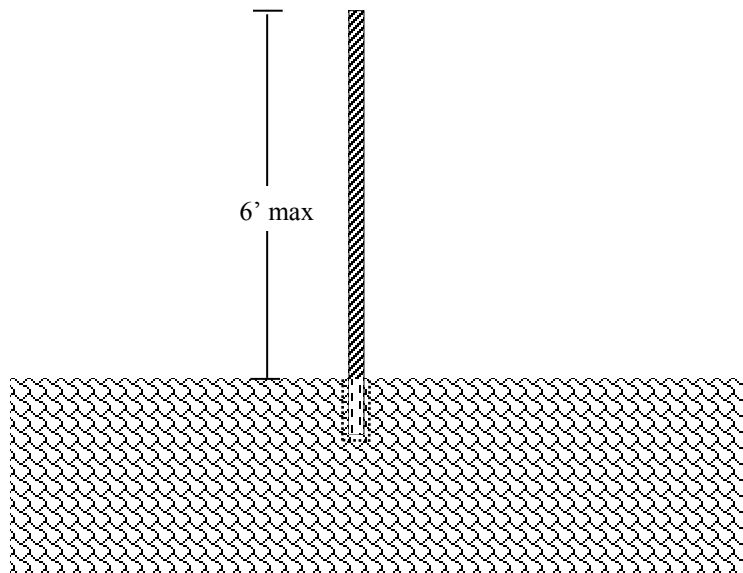
Background:

1. Retaining walls which are not over 4 feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall and not supporting a surcharge do not require a building permit.

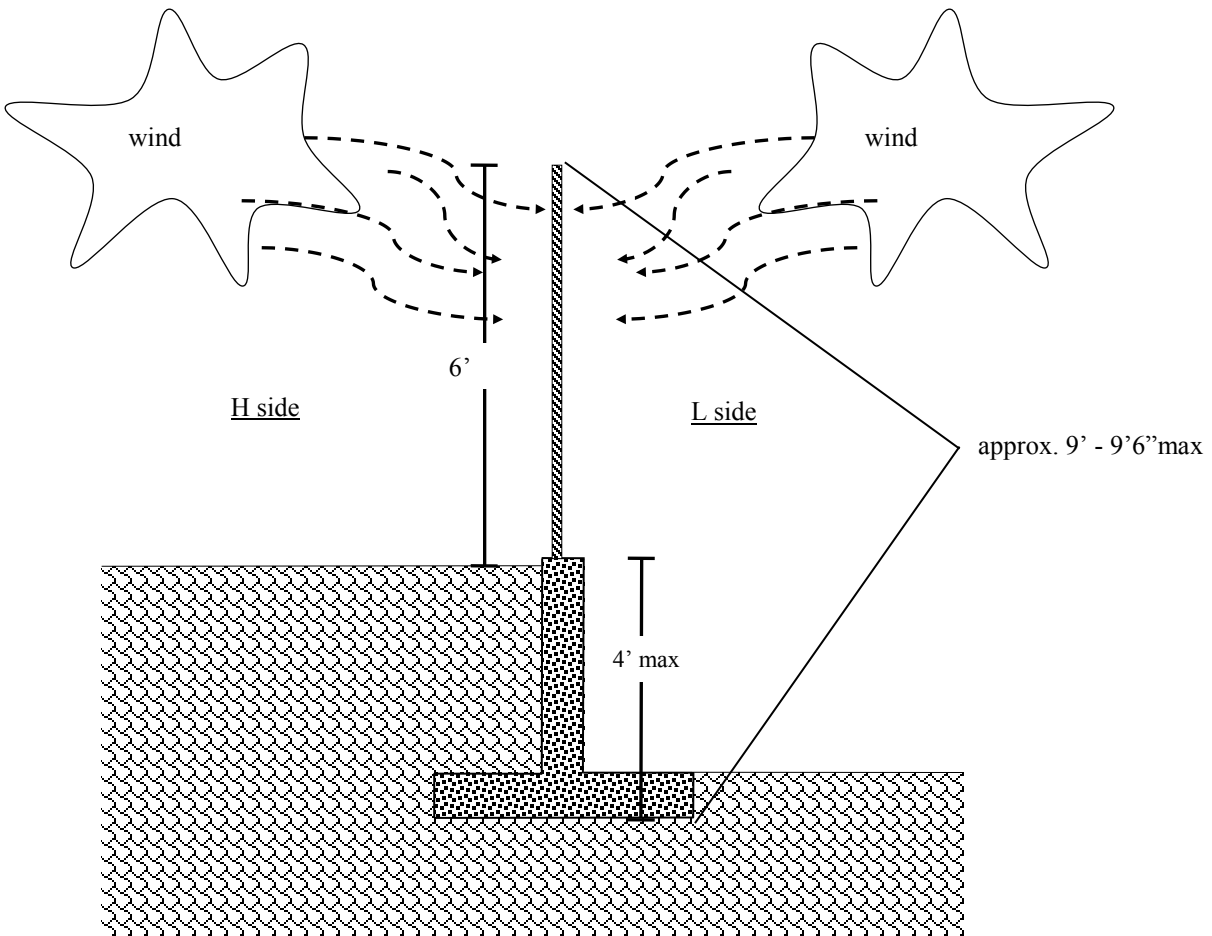


Note: When any point along the wall exceeds the 4 foot max limit, a permit shall be required for the entire wall.

2. Fences not over 6 feet high do not require a building permit. Fences may be constructed of wood, concrete, block, etc.



Note: When any point along the fence exceeds the 6 foot max limit a permit shall be required for the entire fence.



Major factor is wind loads.

On the H side the force of the wind is applied to a 6 foot high fence.

On the L side the force of the wind is applied to a 6 foot high fence plus an approximately 3 foot high above-grade retaining wall. However, the retaining wall is backed by earth. Therefore, the real loading is on the 6 foot high fence.

THEREFORE: In the above case a building permit would not be required; however, planning approval or a variance to setback requirement may be required.

Safety Note: A 4 foot high retaining wall should have at a minimum a 42" high guard rail on top of it if the grade on the high side is "level."