



TECHNICAL GUIDELINE INTERPRETATION MODIFICATION

ISSUE DATE:	August 15, 2005, Revised July 22, 2013
CODE/SECTION:	Phoenix Building Construction Code Administrative Provisions 105.2.2
DEVELOPED BY:	Tom Wandrie, P.E, Building Official
APPROVED BY:	Technical Review Team
REFERENCES:	Zoning Ordinance, Section 703.A, The Code of the City of Phoenix Section 31-13

CODE REQUIREMENTS:

105.2.2 Building Permits. A building permit shall not be required for the following:

Fences not over three (3) feet in height (*as measured from final grade to uppermost part of fence*), and retaining walls that are **not** over three (3) feet in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or III-A liquids.

Fences not included in this exception, not over seven feet high, shall require a building permit demonstrating compliance with the zoning ordinance requirements and city code requirements for site drainage only.

GUIDELINE:

The term "fence" means wood, metal, masonry or concrete fences, walls, screen walls, decorative walls landscape walls, view walls, sound walls, etc. Similar structures that provide support for signage are considered a "sign structure" and not a "fence." Sign structures require both a construction permit and a sign permit. A permit is required for "existing fences" that have signage attached or hung from them. In this case, inspection will be for compliance to zoning requirements only.

The term "surcharge" means any lateral or gravity load applied to a retaining wall over and above the design load of the retained soil.

All fences must meet city zoning ordinance and traffic visibility requirements which in most cases limit the height of fences to 3' in required front yards and visibility triangles at driveways and street intersections.

Fences and retaining walls on hillsides or in preservation locations are to be addressed site specific and the permitting of such may not follow these guidelines.

THE LOCATION AND HEIGHT OF ALL RETAINING WALLS MUST BE SHOWN ON ALL GRADING AND DRAINAGE PLANS.

RETAINING WALL PERMITS REQUIRED:	RETAINING WALL PERMITS NOT REQUIRED:
<p>All retaining walls over three (3) feet in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall</p> <p>All retaining walls three (3) feet or less in height burdened by a surcharge from a house, building, road, swimming pool or supporting a fence on the wall or within three (3) feet measured horizontally from the uphill side of the wall</p>	<p>Retaining walls three (3) feet or less with <u>no</u> surcharge load</p>

Construction Guideline:

For information on how to measure the height of a fence or freestanding wall, see Chapter 7 of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 703.

*Structural design calculations and details are **not required** for individual fences seven (7) feet or less in height. Unsurcharged retaining walls three (3) feet or less in height **do not require** a permit.*

*Retaining walls over three (3) feet in height and fences over seven (7) feet in height **require** structural design calculations and details for construction, complying with appropriate code requirements*

*Combinations of retaining walls and fences **require** structural design calculations and details for construction, complying with appropriate code requirements, regardless of their location and overall height. **NOTE:** Combinations of fences and retaining walls that exceed 9 feet in height require zoning approval prior to permit issuance.*